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THE ALLIANCE AT WORK

LIBYA this week was the foreground of news in this country; it was only natural that it should hold this place, even though our minds were aware of the far greater scope and danger of the Soviet battlefield. Libya meant that the long period of inaction had ended: here, though it might not be the field we should have chosen, a Second Front was opened, and here, for the first time since Dunkirk, a British Army challenged the real enemy on land. The attack was long expected; hopes of swift success were, we suspect, pitched too high. This desert battle has indeed, as Mr. Churchill predicted, resembled an engagement at sea. There are no lines to hold or capture: tanks, like ships, struggle not for positions but for mutual destruction. That the infantry, with apparent ease, retook Bardia, Fort Capuzzo and Gambut is of secondary importance. What did matter was to bring the German tanks to a decisive engagement, in which one of the two fleets must put the other out of action. In one detail Mr. Churchill's parallel has been falsified: the battle was not ended in a few hours and after several days its outcome is still uncertain. Both sides are suffering heavy losses and the anxious question is whether the British force, if it does emerge victorious, will still be strong enough to sweep westwards to Benghazi and on to Tripoli. What reserves General Cunningham may be able to call up we do not know, but it is unlikely that the Germans have on African soil any considerable force beyond the two armoured divisions engaged in this battle. The Italians come seriously into the reckoning only in so far as the Germans can stiffen them.

Amid this African distraction came grave news from the Russian front. Rostov has fallen and it is doubtful whether the broad Don, now partially frozen over, can for long obstruct the German march upon the Caucasus. Round Moscow the attack has been redoubled and in a new direction, round Klin, half-way between Kalinin and Moscow, has reached a point only thirty miles from the capital. The Russians still hold Sevastopol and they can start fresh counter-offensives all the way from Leningrad to the Donetz, where Timoshenko is making a spirited attempt to outflank his enemy north of Rostov. But on balance the news is disquieting: the loss of Rostov must disorganise their oil distribution, besides easing the advance of the invaders towards the wells.

Against these happenings on the main front, let us try to get the Libyan campaign into scale. For twenty-one weeks along a front of 2,000 miles, Russian and German tank formations have been wrestling with the same purpose of mutual annihilation. The Libyan battle from east to west ranges over about seventy miles. Against two armoured divisions in Libya, the Germans have over twenty in Russia and a force of perhaps 230 or 250 divisions all told. In the desert not a single home of a family of our own people is at stake, while the Russians have had to abandon populous cities, great industrial regions and the homes of scores of millions of their own citizens. If our enterprise should fail nothing is lost save tanks and prestige: but on the retention of Moscow as a transport centre and of the oil-fields to which Rostov was the first key turns in large measure the question whether the Red army will survive as an effective belligerent, capable of engaging the main powers of the enemy on land and in the air.

How much, on the other hand, a complete victory in Libya might promise is a highly speculative question. At the least a threat to Egypt would be removed and our tasks eased in the Mediterranean. In French North Africa, no longer under Weygand's command, the effects of the Libyan campaign are not easily calculable. The strategical gain would be considerable, only if our High Command should have the will and the power to land in Sicily, after gaining Tripoli, and from that base to cross the narrow straits into Southern Italy. Only in that event would the Germans be compelled to divert big forces of their own to oppose us, and only at that somewhat distant date in a highly speculative future could this second Front exert an appreciable effect by relieving the pressure on the U.S.S.R.

It comes then to this: that reverses in the U.S.S.R. may have adverse consequences on the single war in which we and the Russians are engaged, which no success in Libya could compensate. We are not convinced that the High Command took the right decision, five months ago, when it decided to allot what we could spare of shipping and tanks for an offensive, to this particular field. Nor are the Russians convinced. Sir Roger Keyes (scarcely an amateur strategist) confirms our view of the High Command. The reports now available of Stalin's recent speech show that what he still calls for is "a second Front *on the Continent of Europe*." An excessive concern for brevity led to the omission of that qualifying phrase from most of the cabled reports. Our resources do not enable us while sending supplies to Russia (now, we gather, arriving on a satisfactory scale) at the same time to carry out an African and a European enterprise. The choice was made; the Libyan venture had no doubt the advantage of being less risky and of fitting in with our own imperial preoccupations. The result is that during the whole period of the invasion of Russia our Army has made no contribution to the strategy of a single Front. That failure, together with the delay in answering the Russian appeal for a declaration of war upon Finland, Hungary and Rumania, all assembled this week together with Spain and Denmark at the Quisling parade in Berlin, lessens the effect of such reassuring speeches as Mr. Eden delivered last week, when he promised our continued co-operation with the U.S.S.R. during and after the war.

Home Front (*By an Industrial Correspondent*)

The concession of the £3 minimum wage to the farm workers is really important. It is true enough that the majority of the County Wage Committees endorsed the concession only because they knew that either the Government or the consumers would have to pay; but that they did endorse it is, nevertheless, a vital fact. £3 is no great shakes as a wage in these days; but it does mean a big advance in status for the farm worker, and a recognition that he can no longer be held to the land without being given some recognition as a nationally important person. No doubt, many farm workers will call to mind that a change hardly less radical in their condition was brought about during the last war under the Corn Production Act—only to be cancelled when the Act was repealed, and the legal minimum wage allowed to lapse altogether, during the post-war slump. This memory will make the labourers' leaders very determined that the same thing shall not recur. But it is bound to happen if there is a similar return to *laissez faire* in the matter of food production. Accordingly, the concession of a living wage to the farm workers involves the adoption of a permanent agricultural policy designed to ensure the maintenance of conditions which will make possible the payment of adequate wages. Some farmers—perhaps the majority—will try to secure that this policy shall take the form of high agrarian protection, at the cost of permanently raising the cost of living for the entire population. The right policy, however, while it may have elements of protection, will have to be mainly directed to bringing about an improvement in the quality of agriculture, especially by increased investment of capital in the land and by better training of, and opportunities of employment for, skilled farm managers and technicians. Milk production is obviously a key problem of post-war agriculture ; and no single thing is as important as an enlargement of the home market for liquid milk. A policy of this type cannot be carried into effect during the war ; but preparations can be made for it.

* * *

It was very good news when the American Mine Workers' Union decided to call off the coal strike, and to accept the President's proposal that the "closed shop" issue should go to arbitration. The strike looked like spreading rapidly unless it were promptly settled. If the issue had been really that of the "closed shop" as against the individual worker's right to join or not to join a Union as he pleased, the matter would have been relatively simple. It was, in fact, primarily a struggle against the "open shop," which means something very different—a refusal of the rights of collective bargaining. The great steel concerns have been the foremost upholders of this "open shop" policy; and the attack on their "captive mines" was a move in the campaign to get rid of the "open shop" in these parts of the steel and kindred industries in which it is still maintained, despite all the legislation guaranteeing the right of Union organisation. The decision to end the strike will be particularly welcome to most of the C.I.O. leaders, who could not refuse to support John Lewis and his miners in their demand for the "closed shop" (which is official C.I.O. policy), but was none the less acutely anxious neither to hamper war production nor to provoke a head-on conflict between Labour and Big Business at the present critical moment. The success in ending this strike should considerably strengthen Mr. Roosevelt's hands in dealing with the threatened railway stoppage, which is a simpler matter in that it relates mainly to wages. It will be correspondingly disappointing to those reactionaries who have been yelping for drastic anti-strike legislation, and would sooner be making war on their own working class than helping Gt. Britain and Russia to beat Hitler.

* * *

Winter has its problems here, as well as on the Eastern front. Long travel to and from work, bad housing accommodation, work at a distance from wife and family under compulsory orders, are all much more galling than when the weather is warm and fine. Moreover, as more people—now including women—are compelled to go and work where they do not want to by the operation of the Essential Work Order, there are more mutterings. Some women have just been prosecuted for refusing to go where they were sent on the ground that, as they were already on war work, the Ministry of Labour had no right to move them. The Ministry's answer is that it must move women who have no family responsibilities to the places where labour shortage is acute, and that their places must be taken by women who have ties which prevent them from working far from home. The pressure of compulsion on the women is, indeed, now for the first time beginning to be felt—at a season which causes the hardship to be much greater than it would have been if the new policy had been got going a few months earlier. However, better late than never. What is important is that the application of the new measures of compulsion shall be made as little onerous as possible by doing everything that can possibly be done to improve transport, to render billeting more comprehensive and effective, to open adequate canteens, and to secure that women who are compulsorily moved are not kept standing idle in the factories to which they are sent. That this does still happen, there is unfortunately plenty of evidence. There are still employers who tell you glibly that women's labour is no use, when the truth is that they have refused to put themselves about at all to create tolerable conditions for recruits who are unused to factory work.

* * *

The Board of Trade has prohibited the establishment of new shops without licence ; existing shops are forbidden to extend their lines of business. This measure is, no doubt, a necessary corollary of the decision to withdraw labour from retail trade. But it would be well to bear in mind that this seemingly *negative* step goes a great deal further in shaping the future economic structure of the country than appears on the surface. A recent survey of retail shops in one of the great industrial cities of the country, a city which has sensibly *benefited* from increased employment, shows that the original number of shops has been reduced by almost a quarter. The rate of their disappearance was accelerating in the past half-year. To forbid the small shop from diversifying its business is to introduce discrimination because the large shops can of course continue to sell everything. The small single branch shops, however, employ not less than 60 per cent. of all women over 40 in the area surveyed. It has yet to be demonstrated whether these women can be induced to leave their own shops and take salaried employment in larger shops. The bankruptcy of the small shops, therefore, may not under all circumstances mean a rationalisation of retailing and a better use of man-power. This has been amply demonstrated in Germany, where the Nazi Government had to reverse its policy of discriminating against small shops and had to take steps to maintain them in spite of the steady shrinkage of business. In any case, the present policy of slimming by bankruptcy will not, result in the quickest, most equitable and most rational solution of the retail trade problem. Comprehensive pooling, with adequate compensation for shops that are closed down, is a better system.

A Broadside from Sir Roger Keyes (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent.*)

Although the fact that the Libyan campaign was in progress necessarily restricted debate, the back-benchers, whose protests had won them an extra day of general discussion, made good use of their opportunities.

Kenneth Lindsay set the tone of the debate when he dealt with the neglect of the Home Front by the War Cabinet. He wanted changes in the Civil Service. Men with experience of wartime problems on the Home Front should be brought to the Centre. Colegate, the victor in the recentby-election, spoke with assurance and fluency unusual for a maiden speech. This the House disliked. His appeal that industrialists should be promised a return to their pre-war freedom to compete after the war found no response. His manner was in striking contrast to that of Roger Keyes, who spoke with his usual modesty and hesitancy. Unquestionably he is the worst speaker in the House—and one of the most effective. His criticism of the Whitehall military machine carried conviction. Ness Edwards, whose contributions to debates improve every time he speaks, voiced the general sentiment when he said : "It came as a shock when Sir R. Keyes made a very grave charge against the military direction of the war. Very many of us had thought that such charges were confined to the economic planning of the war." George Schuster took the opportunity of this debate to survey the defects in our production organisation and to make constructive proposals for securing maximum output. George Strauss followed him with a convincing attack on the Government's failure to co-operate fully with Russia. Vernon Bartlett made a timely appeal to the Government to accept criticism in good part. Sir George Davies from the Conservative benches spoke of the feeling of unrest Members found when visiting their constituencies, and urged that in the great schemes of industry for increased output we do all we can to make the conditions under which the people live as easy and agreeable as possible." Greenwood made no serious reply to Keyes. Why he should suggest that what Keyes had said might divert our minds from our major objective of winning the war is difficult to understand, particularly when every speech, with the exception of Dr. Salter's, was directed towards that end. (Salter, speaking with considerable emotion on the last occasion on which he would address the House, used "the present opportunity to oppose the present war and everything connected with it.") This day's debate was well worth while and showed the House of Commons at its best, voicing the feelings of the people in plain terms without great flights of oratory.

THE HEEL OF THE AXIS

Hitler's obvious retort to the Libyan campaign would be the occupation of French North Africa. He is said to have demanded it, and to have included the French fleet to secure his communications. As an alternative he is believed to have threatened to march into unoccupied France and cause his armies to live off that desperately hungry country. Weygand has been swept away to leave the room clear for German possession. Whether the government of the colonies takes the form of a commission of Darlan's henchmen, or a posse of German officers matters little ; though the delay in its constitution suggests that the unhappy Marshal Pétain is trying to secure some semblance of French rule, if only to preserve his own government from the fury of the people.

The Germans, on the other hand, may well hesitate to undertake vast new commitments at this moment. Hitler has hinted about his great Peace-and-New-Order conference much too openly for this pinchbeck Anti-Comintern Pact party to pass as anything but a substitute. The Führer could not offer peace, because he has not won victory. Instead, Ribbentrop presided over a quinquennial meeting of the Anti-Comintern Powers, Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, Hungary and Manchukuo ; and Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, Croatia, Rumania, Slovakia, have adhered—Nanking promising to join by telegram.

Hitler cannot proclaim a New Order because civil war is raging in Jugoslavia, and political demonstrations, sometimes accompanied by sabotage and assassination, occur in most parts of Europe. Even where there is no civil war or sabotage or open resistance, there is a state of opinion, a tenseness of atmosphere, a chaos of administration which even Dr. Goebbels cannot present as any kind of order. Let us take, for example, the case of Italy. We have reliable information from Italy. It is not shut off from the rest of the world as securely as Poland, or Hungary, or Germany itself. We know that there are Italians who say, as patriots, that they hope for the defeat of their country, since only through a downfall of Mussolini and a break with the Axis can Italy ever again raise its head as an independent nation. Internally, matters have gone from bad to worse. Italian State Decrees, whether they deal with food or clothing or any other department of totalitarian life, have now reached a baffling point of chaos. Each decree contradicts the last; it is doubtful how many are obeyed. The food situation is universally serious; fuel and other essentials are everywhere short, while discontent grows, especially in districts which see supplies which Italians need wafted away for German consumption. A large number, perhaps half a million, Italians have been taken to work in German factories, so that German workers may be released for the Eastern Front. The position of these Italian workers becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish from that of French political prisoners in Germany. None of Mussolini's wars has been popular. Abyssinia brought quick disillusion and the Spanish war was detested long before it was over. In this war the Italian army has shown no anxiety to fight. The Italian air force was built for prestige. It was the showy plaything of the Duce and his entourage. If it had really been made of plaster it would have played almost as important a part in this war. On the sea Italy has a tradition; as a seafaring people Italians respect and fear the British Navy and are humiliated by the failure of their navy. The Duce now stands alone; almost all the Fascist leaders have been discredited. Fascism itself has few defenders. In the years immediately before the war it was hard to find an Italian to whom Fascism was a faith. Detestation of Germany was almost universal in Italy as early as 1938.

Hitler can do much, but to declare a New Order which would include Italy, even as the playground for the leaders of the Third Reich—the peculiar function allotted to Italy—is impossible in these circumstances. For Britain, on the other hand, Italy offers a superb field for political warfare. We can offer and in fact supply all those necessities of life of which the German alliance has deprived the Italian people. If the Italian army in North Africa is smashed, if British domination of the Mediterranean is again established, as seems likely, the opportunity of military landing, combined with a well-thought-out propaganda drive, would seem highly favourable. It is a possibility that Hitler cannot ignore. Italian troops are not playing any conspicuous part on the Russian front, but Italian labour both in Germany and behind the lines is of great importance to Germany, while Italian regiments are used throughout the Balkans to keep down peasant populations, which would otherwise everywhere be imitating those who are in revolt in the Jugoslav mountains. A success in North Africa, a well-conceived propaganda drive, the right offers to Italy, the right promises with tangible earnests of fulfilment, perhaps the occupation of Sicily and Southern Italy—some such programme as this might turn Italy into a country at least as openly hostile to Germany as France and might force the Germans to divert 30 or 40 divisions to policing the entire South-East and Mediterranean fringe of the Third Reich. Has our Department of Political Warfare decided how to use that situation and how to make Italian soldiers, workers and peasants sure that the benefits they could hope for if they co-operate with the forces of liberation are at least as great as the risks of destruction that they face as long as their country remains Fascist and part of the Axis?

JAPAN BARGAINS

(From a Correspondent)

WHY did Saburo Kurusu, Japan's envoy, go to Washington?

The obvious answer—not necessarily the correct one—is that Japan, shrinking from the ugly risk of war against five Powers, prefers a new agreement in the Pacific. Nearly 4½ years of inconclusive fighting in China have not improved Japan's chances in a struggle against the coalition of America, British Empire, Netherlands and perhaps Russia. Nor could Germany and Italy give the Japanese any direct support. Feeling the pinch of economic sanctions and especially of the Democracies' oil embargo, the Japanese are squealing for relief. Now in their fourth month, sanctions have compelled Japan to start consuming her reserves; if this goes on, it will weaken Japan's ability even to continue the campaign in China.

These are among the adversities stirring General Tojo, the Prime Minister, to declare this week that "the international situation surrounding Japan is so grave that she is now at a crisis in her national destiny unknown in her 2,600 years' history."

But there is another possible explanation of Kurusu's mission: he may have been sent to Washington primarily to find out whether America and Britain intend to fight if Japan pushes south beyond Indo-China. If seeking the solution to this riddle (is it still a riddle?) ranks foremost, though inconspicuously, in Kurusu's assignment, then he must also be hot on the scent of what America and Britain would do if Japan attacks Russia.

The Japanese ambassador in Washington, Admiral Nomura, whom Kurusu has come only "to assist," is said to have been warning his government for several months that any further Japanese southward advance, even into Thailand, means war with the United States and British Commonwealth. Perhaps the Japanese army and navy, now completely in control of the government to the exclusion of cautious Big Business, wished Kurusu to check Nomura's gloomy predictions and learn whether, after all, the Democracies are really so tough and have decided to fight if Japan goes ahead.

What is known of the Far Eastern negotiations in Washington strengthens the argument that Kurusu is as much interested in fixing the timetable of aggrandisement as in any agreement to ensure peace. If Kurusu could induce the Democracies to resume supplies to Japan on a fairly big scale in return for a couple of Japanese phantom "concessions," Japan would be foolish not to leap at the chance.

Reports in American and British newspapers, though incomplete, suggest Kurusu has been discussing with Roosevelt and Hull a provisional pact of three months' duration. If concluded, this temporary arrangement would be caste as the prelude to a lasting agreement along the lines of the defunct Nine Power treaty which safeguarded China's independence and territorial integrity and equal trading opportunities for all Powers in China. The new long-term treaty would presumably go beyond this, committing the Pacific Powers to non-aggression and non-interference in the affairs of all Far Eastern countries, non-discrimination in trade, abolition of exterritoriality. It would be predicated on Japanese military withdrawal from China. Scrapping of Japan's alliance with Germany and Italy would be a condition for agreement.

The American press intimates that the proposals Kurusu made on arriving in Washington included an offer to withdraw Japan's armed forces from Southern to Northern Indo-China and to refrain from fresh southward expansion. In return for this peculiar manifestation of Japanese humour, Kurusu is said to have asked for the restoration of Japan's economic relations with the Democracies to their status before July 26 when Japanese assets were frozen and American, British Empire and Dutch trade with Japan brought to a standstill.

Roosevelt and Churchill are anxious to avoid war in the Pacific. That is common sense. Although the Democracies are justifiably confident of winning a war against Japan, it would divide American strength and divert Britain from her paramount struggle with Germany.

What price should the Democracies pay to keep peace with Japan? Consent to a Japanese token force in North Indo-China would be distasteful. The Japanese have no right on French soil. If such a token force included any considerable number of planes and armoured vehicles, it would continue to threaten the Burma Road. Even if these objections could be overlooked and Japan were allowed a limited number of troops in Indo-China, would the U.S.A. be able to inspect Japanese forces there and see that the forces conformed to the agreed limit?

Far more disquieting are press reports that America might unfreeze Japan's assets and relax the licensing system so that Japan would again receive oil and cotton. Can Japan be compelled to devote these commodities to civilian purposes when they are so essential for war? These are the very products Japan most needs for killing Chinese, conquering China and preparing for future conquests. And if America lifts the trade ban, then Britain, India and the Dutch East Indies will certainly follow suit.

Scrutiny of Kurusu's terms, as far as they have become known, even suggests that they contain new aggressive implications. Mere transfer of Japanese forces from Southern to Northern Indo-China would mean their total concentration close to the Chinese province of Yunnan and better situated to strike at the Burma Road. True, this shift would move Japanese troops farther from Malaya and Thailand, but they could be rushed back there in a few days. Are the Democracies ready to buy an imaginary easing of the Japanese threat to the South at the cost of a real, increased menace to China?

Anyone who hears that Japan is offering to forgo her pan-Pacific expansion to the South intuitively asks the value of such a pledge. East Asia is littered with Japan's torn treaties. To recall only one of Japan's more recent promises: On July 5 the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ohashi, assured Sir Robert Craigie, Britain's ambassador, that Japan was not contemplating acquisition of naval and air bases in Southern Indo-China. Then came Japan's threats to Vichy. And on July 25 when Japanese troops and warships were already on the move, the new Foreign Minister, Toyoda, informed Craigie that Japan was going into Southern Indo-China. In she went and helped herself to naval and air bases, incidentally also taking control of all Indo-China.

Furthermore, why is Tokio apparently offering a pledge of non-aggression in the South, but not in the North concerning Russia? The Japanese are pointing to their April neutrality pact with Stalin as sufficient guarantee. But it's fair to ask why, if she means to fulfil it, Japan should object to mentioning an existing commitment in a new agreement.

In the midst of Kurusu's Washington talks, already punctuated by warlike speeches and resolutions in the Japanese Diet and by the whoops of a press on the warpath, came news from Bangkok which prompts one to ask again what game Japan is playing. The report, from a usually trustworthy source, said that a high Japanese official had orally proposed to the Thai government that Japan take over Thailand's entire military defence, which the Thai Prime Minister refused. Is this another token of Japan's readiness loyally to renounce southward expansion?

A LONDON DIARY

Ernst Udet, German flying ace who died in an accident last week, appears to have been an imperfectly fervent Nazi. He was known to have secretly arranged for the safety of anti-Nazis and others threatened during the Roehm purge. A friend tells me that she met one of these men whom Udet brought by plane at night into Italy—and he said that Udet was fully aware of the consequences it might have for his own life and freedom. He was not molested because he was needed for the reconstruction of the German air force, and was one of the most popular men in Germany. He was famous for his eccentric life and his acrobatic plane demonstrations. In 1919, he was so poor that his friends had to pay for his drinks. Later, he got a job in the *Bayerische Motorenwerke*. From the Nazis Udet got what he wanted—the entire reconstruction, the "renaissance" of the Luftwaffe. He was popular with his men; he disliked Nazism, and helped its victims in various ways that were within his scope. My friend tells me that of all the leading men in the Third Reich he was the least Nazi in mind. For this reason, and because his death coincides with another accident which ended the life of another great German airman, I understand why there are rumours that Udet's accident was not accidental.

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One would have thought that the outspoken utterances of the Catholic Bishop of Munster would have pleased every enemy of the Nazis. The fact that the Bishop is a good patriotic German who wishes for a German victory greatly strengthens the force of his appeal to Catholic resistance to the Nazis. When the leaders of various groups inside a totalitarian state find that their own position is intolerable and begin to say so, then one sees, however remotely, the beginning of the end of a dictatorship. Yet the *Sunday Times* and Vansittart, who now runs in such an oddly assorted harness with Lord Kemsley, finds no cause for rejoicing in a split in German unity. I have seen many mean campaigns but I am not sure that I have seen anything fall lower than some of the recent attacks in the *Sunday Times* on refugees and others. One unfortunate little Austrian Jew is held up as a terrifying example of pan-Germanism. Why? Because we are told he did not want an independent Austria. The evidence for this is that he preferred to serve the British in a Pioneer Corps than to join a separate Austrian army! Actually the letter on which the attack was based made it clear that the author wanted no political discussion during the war; he just wanted Hitler's defeat, and so preferred to serve in the British rather than in the Austrian army. I wish some of those who scheme for a return of the Hapsburgs and who often have important and recognised positions in the councils of the Allies were, from our point of view, equally trustworthy.

* * *

There are no bounds to the silliness of some M.P.s. Mr. Selley and Sir Waldron Smithers are trying, by means of questions in Parliament, to get Federal Union discredited. Should the Brains Trust be allowed to mention this topic? Should not the Penguin *Case for Federal Union* be suppressed? Should not Federal Union meetings and lectures be banned? The reason given is that advocacy of Federation is incompatible with the Atlantic Charter! The same could be said of most Conservative propaganda. On the other hand freedom is amongst the promises of the Charter, while as *Federal Union News* very properly points out, Mr. Churchill offered federal union to France and Mr. Attlee said that "Europe must federate or perish." The Prime Minister, himself for long an heresiarch, and Mr. Morrison have given clear and sensible answers to these childish questions.

Next Sunday, at 2,30, in the Stoll Theatre, a number of speakers, including V. A. Potts, the President of the N.U.R., T. L. Horabin, the Liberal M.P., William Rust and others, will speak to a mass meeting in favour of raising the ban on the *Daily Worker*. Discussing this event with me, a Communist friend put the matter like this. "The Government," he said, "take for granted that the 'Left' must support the war as long as Russia's in it. We must urge all possible production, and so we do." We are pledged to support Mr. Churchill—and so we are; even to the point of supporting Conservative candidates at by-elections when other candidates put up specifically as all-aid-to-Russia candidates. They think they have no reason to worry about the Left any more; why go to the bother of allowing the *Daily Worker* to appear? They are making a mistake. They are quite right about us. Communists will do all they can. But there are other Left groups who take a different line, who find it very difficult to support Mr. Churchill and who may turn, if left alone, and run after all sorts of Trotskyites' hares and I.L.P. red herrings. Such people take no notice of official propaganda. We are the only paper who can influence those who think the whole war "hooey" anyway, or who are against fighting for the capitalist and so on. It's our job to convince them, but we cannot possibly cover the field without the *Daily Worker*.

* * *

George Birkbeck, who died just a hundred years ago, was a medical practitioner in the City of London. He was one of that long and continuing line of representative Englishmen who spend their lives trying to remedy an injustice. To Birkbeck it was intolerable that 19 out of every 20 citizens should go through life without making contact with the nation's cultural and intellectual heritage. And so, as Professor of Natural Philosophy at Glasgow—he had been debarred as a Quaker from going either to Oxford or Cambridge—Birkbeck started on Saturday nights a series of free lectures for working men. On December 2nd, at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, off the Strand, Birkbeck, the founder, was elected the first president of what afterwards became Birkbeck College. Within twenty years between 500 and 600 Mechanics Institutes had sprung up throughout the length and breadth of the country. There was the usual fuss. The *St. James's Chronicle* announced that "a scheme more completely adapted for the destruction of this empire could not have been invented by the author of evil himself." *Bell's Weekly Messenger* referred to the "awful effects" of mathematics, to which, he said, "the unhappy scepticism in France has been justly ascribed."

In the summer of 1939 Birkbeck College, now a fully-fledged school of the University of London, could not evacuate, since the majority of its students were tied to London by the necessity of earning their living. During the *Sitzkreig* it was flooded with the students whom other evacuated colleges had left behind. During this period its public lunch hour lectures attracted large and crowded audiences. Then came the blitz; about half the College accommodation was burnt and blown to pieces, and the library destroyed. Now in the centenary week of its founder's death, Birkbeck, almost silent during the week, is again full of students whose work is concentrated into the week-end.

* * *

Highland trains are sociable. They meander by rivers and over passes, stopping every five miles; and after six stations everybody in the carriage is talking. My *vis-a-vis* in a recent journey was a large, shy artilleryman from Bristol, going back from leave, so he told me, to a completely empty moor above a remote shore. He was far less gloomy than such a fate might have warranted, and presently the reason came out. His coastal defence unit was run by an imaginative commander, who had trained every single man on it till he was efficient in every one of the different jobs. "I'm on range-sights; but if one of the signallers, or one of the searchlight men were killed, I could do his job; and we know all the machines backwards; we could all repair them." How many of those in authority realise that one of the main reasons for boredom and cynicism in the Army is the feeling that the time is wasted, and that a new skill is not acquired? Where men learn a new technique they are in good heart; where the emphasis is on spit and polish they brown off. After all, the wartime army is over two years old; by this time at least half of the serving men could be skilled craftsmen. **Critic**

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to G. P. Bartholomew

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The main reason for the poignant and engrossing character of the struggle in Russia is not so much its importance for Russia and the Allies as the fact that it remains unresolved.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Out of compliment to our Allies, Mrs. Bailey has chosen a black ensemble of Russian trend.—*Blackpool Gazette and Herald.*

DEATH ABOLISHED.
Immortality brought to light!

Come, hear a remarkable revelation—good news—explained in detail, in logical, reasonable language, at the Ministry of Soul Security—Calvary Church, Knotty Ash, this Sunday at SIX.—*Liverpool Evening Post.*

Now that admission to places of entertainment in Oxford is not conditional on the carrying of a gas mask, I can reveal (writes a country correspondent) the deception practised by some patrons.

In many cases people, especially those from the country, used their gas mask cases to carry some of the articles they had collected in their shopping expeditions.—*Oxford Mail.*

NEUROPA

"The Powers of the anti-comintern pact have requested the Governments of Bulgaria, China, Denmark, Finland, Croatia, Rumania and Slovakia to join this pact. With the destruction of the State power of communism in this deed of world-historic importance, a blow has unquestionably been dealt to the power of communism from which it will never recover."—Ribbentrop, Nov. 25th.

Neuropa's formal act of state
Is solemnly enacted
By lesser neighbours, to the great
Decisively attracted,
The guests appearing in a state
Sufficiently distracted.

New signatories show a slight
Anxiety neurosis,
A nervous loss of appetite,
Some symptoms of hypnosis,
Due to the blast of Nazi might
Or Hitler's halitosis.

Destruction of the Comintern
Concludes their grateful mission,
But though Neuropa's front, they learn,
Is in superb condition,
Its rear, they notice with concern
Is in decomposition.

Their shaking hands upon the pact
Earn stay of execution
While yet inviting in the act
Historic retribution
After the next world-shaking fact,
Neuropa's dissolution. **Sagittarius**

THE PROBLEM OF BURMA

[The author of this article is a Canadian journalist now in this country. As British correspondent of *Asia*, he was granted interviews with U Saw, the Prime Minister of Burma, whom he met after his conference with Mr. Churchill on October 17, and then with Mr. Amery after U Saw's departure for the United States]

THE Prime Minister of Burma is young—in fact, at 40 he is the youngest Prime Minister in the world. In appearance he is amazingly like what you would expect a Prime Minister of Burma to be like: he is of medium height, with a corpular rotundity that is in utter harmony with his round, smiling, Burmese features. His English is no more than fair, but what he lacks in syntax and vocabulary, he makes up for in expressiveness: U Saw is reputed to be one of the best orators in the Burmese Parliament. In his bearing he is extremely friendly and democratic.

Before U Saw became Premier, he was the editor of *The Sun*, most influential paper in Burma. He is the leader of the *Myochit* Party (Myochit, literally, means "Lover of the Race"), which, with 36 seats, is the largest group in the Burmese Legislature.

My first question dealt with the purpose of the Prime Minister's visit. U Saw agreed that it was true, that he had come to England in an endeavour to obtain a definite promise of Dominion status. He told me of the high hopes the Atlantic Charter had encouraged, and of how bitterly disappointed they had been by Mr. Churchill's declaration of September 9th.

"The case for Burma," said U Saw, "has been definitively put by the Atlantic Charter. We believe that there can be no moral justification for any action based on force. We are not even asking that Burma be restored to the status of an independent kingdom. We are asking merely for a promise of full self-government within the Commonwealth as soon as the war is over.

"Burma was brought into the war by an edict of the Governor. The elected representatives of the people were not consulted. Burma, nevertheless, is giving unstinting support to the Empire's war effort. Our expenditure on defence during the coming year will total Rs. 12 crores ($36,000,000)—over 70 per cent. of our annual revenue. But the question we ask is this: 'Are the people of Burma to be called upon to fight for the freedom of Poland and France and Czechoslovakia, and are they at the same time to be denied freedom for themselves?'

"I know how the argument is advanced that a country with Burma's brief experience in constitutional government is hardly equipped for Dominion status. Yet on all counts the Burmese Legislature has made an impressive showing since its inception in 1937. The sole subjects which are reserved by the Governor are Defence and Foreign Affairs.

I asked U Saw whether it was true that there was much pro-Japanese sentiment in Burma.

"The attitude of my Government towards Japan," U Saw told me, "is expressed in the fact that Burma has followed the lead of Britain and the United States in virtually abrogating its trade with Japan. Don't forget that Japan used to account for about 20 per cent. of our total foreign trade. She took a large part of our rice crop and nine-tenths of our cotton.

"There is a small section of Burmese opinion which believes that to aid Britain win the war means to aid Britain to keep us in subjection. This opinion is represented in Parliament by the Freedom Bloc—but many of the leaders of this bloc, including Ba Maw, the former Premier, are now in jail. There is another section, which, while it cherishes no love for the Japanese, feels that if it is Burma's destiny to remain a subject nation, then it might be better to be governed by a nation that is of the same blood and of the same religion. But by and large the Burmese people prefer the devil they know to the devil they don't know."

U Saw derided the suggestion that Burma was so rent by divisional differences that it would be dangerous to vest authority in a central Government. "The differences between the Burmese proper and the Shans, the Karens, the Kachins and the Chins are certainly of no more serious an order than the differences between the Englishmen, the Scotsmen, the Welshmen, and the Northern Irish. We share a common culture and a common religion. In addition to the fact that our languages are related, Burmese is the *lingua franca* of the country. The attitude of the Burmese majority to the indigenous minorities has been one of complete tolerance.

"The British Government has informed the Indian people that they must settle their internal differences before they can hope for Dominion status. If it were to make such an offer to Burma, we would say 'Good!' because we are confident that, given the prospect of full self-government, we can easily achieve an agreement with our native minorities."

My final question to U Saw was whether a definite promise of Dominion status would result in an increased war effort on Burma's part. At no point in the conversation was U Saw more categorical. "If the Burmese people were convinced that they were fighting for their own freedom as well as for that of the rest of the world, then there can be no question about it—Burma's war-effort would be increased four-fold."

On November 3rd U Saw was informed that the answer was "No." The Government reiterated the thrice-stated assurance of Sir Archibald Cochrane, until recently Governor of Burma, that it had the intention to promote the attainment of Dominion status for Burma, the precise time to be governed by Burma's ability to cope with her problems of defence and foreign affairs in the post-war world.

To a Press conference that afternoon U Saw spoke with a trenchancy that made even hardened newspapermen pop their eyes a bit . . . . "In the Atlantic Charter the British Government gives as a war aim the liberation and freedom of small nations. My only request to the British Government is that before they free the countries that are under Hitler, let them free the countries in the British Empire. No one knows when Burma will get self-government."

The following day, November 4th, U Saw was the guest of honour at a luncheon held under the joint auspices of the East India Association and the Royal Empire Association. Mr. Amery presided. Chairman and guest of honour addressed each other with diplomatic courtesy and complete forthrightness, in the best tradition of British democracy. Mr. Amery said about U Saw: "He has not been fully satisfied concerning the form with which we felt it best to express our intentions, and with that frankness which we welcome here, he has expressed his dissatisfaction."

U. Saw addressed Mr. Amery as a "warm-hearted and genial Secretary of State for Burma . . . . who, so far as the policy of his Government allows him, is sympathetic to Burmese aspirations." Then U Saw went on: At least the British public will not be able any longer to plead ignorance of what the Burmese people mean and want, and when reporting to the people of my own country the result of my mission, I shall be able to say that there is a body of public opinion in England which admits Burma's case for full self-government.

* * *

The day after U Saw's departure from London, I was received by Mr. Amery—a Mr. Amery quite as genial and sympathetic as U Saw had described him.

"I appreciate and sympathise with the national aspirations of the Burmese people," Mr. Amery told me. "And I can also understand that there should exist a widespread sympathy for these aspirations in America. From a distance the problem appears relatively simple. In reality, it is extraordinarily complex. We must take into account not only all possible international contingencies, but also the internal situation in Burma. While it is true that sectional differences in Burma are fortunately not as acute as they are in India, it is also true, for example, that at the Round Table Conference the Shan leaders were opposed to control by a central Burmese Government.

"Under all these circumstances the Government did not feel justified in giving an unconditional pledge which might only result in serious misunderstanding. We have informed U Saw that it is our desire to assist Burma to achieve Dominion status at the earliest possible date, and that to this end we favour calling a conference on Burma's status as soon as the war is over. U Saw, on the other hand, asked us to tie ourselves down to the declaration that, after the termination of the war, Burma would automatically be accorded Dominion status, subject only to temporary reservations of Defence and Foreign Affairs. The difference between us is one of form and not of purpose. What the Burmese advocates of an immediate categorical statement fail to realise is that no member of the British Commonwealth has achieved Dominion status as a result of a dated promise delivered beforehand; they have achieved Dominion status rather as a result of a process of natural growth. That our assurances to Burma are made in all good faith is attested to by the remarkable degree of autonomy which Burma has achieved since its reconstitution as a separate unit of the Empire in 1937."

Mr. Amery confirmed my information that in the course of the discussion U Saw had offered to give Britain a certain measure of control over military and foreign affairs for a temporary period after Dominion status came into effect. I asked him whether such a compromise would not be satisfactory to the British Government.

"The offer in no way affected the general tenor of our conversations," Mr. Amery informed me. "We felt that the complexities of the situation, nationally and internationally, prevented us from specifying a definite date. We hope that U Saw believes that, despite the unavoidably general form in which it is couched, Britain will honour her assurance to Burma."

I asked Mr. Amery whether, in view of the possibility of war in the Far East, the goodwill of the Burmese people might not be considered a definite factor in the military situation. I informed the Secretary of State that U Saw had assured me in the most categorical terms that a definite promise of Dominion status would result in a fourfold war effort on Burma's part. And I also referred him to the possibility that if U Saw failed to come back with the promise in his pocket, his Ministry might be through . . . . What would the British Administration do if U Saw's Government were compelled to resign and if, as appears most likely, it were found impossible to form another Cabinet? Would the Administration rule by emergency powers, as it has been constrained to do in India?

"I do not wish to cross a bridge before I come to it," replied Mr. Amery. "But if such a situation did unfortunately develop, we should have to find a solution. The Government has weighed everything in the balance and it is convinced that its present course will give the greatest satisfaction in the long run."

U Saw has gone on his way. If he failed to achieve Dominion status for Burma, at least it must be said that the conversations between himself and the Government were unprecedented for their bluntness. "What I liked about Mr. Churchill particularly," said U Saw in his statement to the Press on November 4th, "was that he was so very blunt. I was blunt also. I was purposely blunt."

DAVID MARTIN

ON OFFALS

WHO was it, I wonder, who during the last war persuaded the authorities to apply the word “ offals ” to a number of kinds of food previously regarded by many people as delicacies? I suspect him of having been a fanatical vegetarian, determined to take advantage of the war to cure his fellow-countrymen of their taste for kidneys on toast and calves’ liver and bacon. “ If such things are to be made coupon-free,” he must have said to himself, “ I will see to it that they are called by so disgusting a name that no decent person will be willing to eat them. And when once people have been taught to look with loathing on kidneys, liver, sweetbreads and tripe, a general dislike of meat in all its forms—beef, mutton and poultry—is certain to follow.”

Most of us, I am sure, had never heard offals called “ offals ” until this became the official description of them during the war. The word “ offal ” had until then conveyed to us something eatable only by hyenas and carrion-crows—unfit, as the phrase goes, for human consumption. And even to-day the Concise Oxford Dictionary gives no support to the Ministry of Food’s epithet for some of the most sought-after dainties of the butcher’s shop. In the Dictionary the definition of “ offal ” runs : “ Refuse, waste stuff, scraps, garbage ; parts cut off as waste from carcases meant for food, especially entrails, also head, tail, etc. ; carrion, putrid flesh ; low-priced fish ; . . . . off-scourings, dregs, of milk, wheat, wood, etc., inferior.” Who, reading this definition, could find in it any hint of the beauty his palate had so often savoured in oxtail soup or a black pudding or a dish of tripe and onions ? Are these things refuse, waste stuff, or garbage, carrion or putrid flesh ? I suspect that, if the official at the Ministry of Food at the time had been more courageous, he would have classified them all as “ garbage.” But, being timid, he compromised on the slightly less revolting word “ offals ”—which, according to the Dictionary, is derived from “ off-fall,” and originally meant simply “ what falls off.” In view of this derivation, the modern use of the word seems all the more inaccurate and unpardonable. For who ever heard of a calf’s liver falling off ? I am ready to wager that the thing never happened outside the nightmare of an imaginative vegetarian.

It seems to me then, that Lord Woolton should now drop the word “ offals ” and introduce a more appropriate name for what, after all, have long been among the favourite foods of human beings. Why not call them “ titbits ” or “ odds and ends ” or even “ inter alia ” ? “ Swill ” is good enough as a description of what goes into a pig’s trough, but man, the most fastidious of the animals, does not like to be put off his food by grossness of nomenclature. You will see an example of his delicacy of mind in his choice of the name “ sweetbread ” for what the dictionaries define as “ pancreas or thymus gland, especially of calf as food.” The truth is we should be repelled by a good many of the foods we eat if we thought of them in the terms in which they are defined in the dictionaries. When we sit down to a plate of calves’ liver and bacon, for example, we dare not face the fact that the liver we are about to eat is a “ large glandular organ in vertebratas secreting bile and purifying venous blood.” Think of liver in that way and you will be inclined to say : “ Take it away and bring me cauliflower *au gratin*.” The kidney, again, sounds a less appetising breakfast dish when we realise that it is “ one of a pair of glandular organs in abdominal cavity of mammals, birds and reptiles.”

As for the gizzard, I should not have been so eager to be given it as a child if I had known it was a “ bird’s second stomach for grinding the food mixed in the first with gastric juice.” I always thought of it merely as a nice india-rubber-flavoured food that played no part in life except as an addendum to the wing of a roast chicken and that was very much preferable to liver. In England they do not seem to cook the gizzard, but at home it was a delicacy for children next to the merrythought. Giblets, on the other hand, I never tasted at home, and I would not, unless I was starving, eat them now. Their name inspires distrust. They sound too like offals as offals are defined in the dictionaries

Vegetarians have a great advantage over us meat-eaters in not having to disguise from themselves the nature of the food they are eating. No man instinctively shrinks from eating a bean or a nut or a lettuce. There is a kind of primal innocence of making a meal of such things. I feel no compunction in eating a potato from my garden, but I should be horrified at the thought of eating a hen from my poultry-run. I can eat other people’s chickens without too many twinges, but not my own. This shows how necessary it is for us meat-eaters to resort to make-believe at the table. We must at all costs refuse to realise what we are doing as we dine. Our dishes must be as remote as possible from the facts of life and must not remind our imaginations of the field and farmyard creatures to which we owe them. I hate to see the phrase “ baby turkey ” or “ baby pork-chops ” on a menu. It makes me feel like a cannibal and saddens me—or very nearly saddens me—as I eat. I am sure it was a sound instinct that led the proprietors of the most civilised restaurants in England to print their menus in French. This enabled the most squeamish of us scarcely to know what we were eating and so to enjoy our food as innocently as a vegetarian enjoys his marrow-fats.

How charmingly “ poitrine de veau aux petits pois ” strikes the eye and the ear ! Who could resist “ paupiettes de veau à la jardinière ” ? “ Ris de veau à la Dubarry ” and “ ris de veau frit à la Villeroi ” are phrases that sharpen the guiltless appetite. The vulgar “ collared beef ” becomes transmuted into the tempting “ boeuf épicé.” Then there is a dish which in English bears the odious name “ smothered chicken,” but which awakens no repulsion under its French name, “ poulet etuvé.” Even rabbit seems almost eatable when it is Frenchified into “ lapin roti à l’Espagnole.”

Perhaps, however, French is too widely known in England entirely to conceal the truth about what he is eating from the diner. It might be a good notion on the part of a restaurant proprietor to draw up his menus in a language with which few Englishmen are familiar. Russian, for example. What Londoner would know that he was eating kidney with potatoes and salt cucumbers if the dish were called by its Russian name “ Potchki s kartofelen e solionimi ogourzami ” ? Loin of pork with sweet sauce, again, looks much more remote from the animal world when it is called “ Svinai groudimka s sladkim sousom.” Turkey with sherry sauce seems a more Christian dish under its mystical Russian name, “ Indieek s vishniovim sousom ” ; and who could refuse a helping of “ outka farshirovani grouzdiami,” which, I believe, is Russian for “ duck stuffed with salt mushrooms ” ?

The Poles, too, have some good names for concealing from the English meat-eater the fact that he is next door to a cannibal. Among the best of them—which I quote from *Recipes of All Nations*—is “ kuropatiwvy tlumione w lisciash windgronowych ”—a charming description of partridges in vine leaves.

Chinese, however, is, perhaps, the best language of all to draw upon for the names of dishes. How pleasant it would be to frequent a restaurant in which chicken was called “ gai see chow min,” and steamed pigeons with herbs were called “ why gee gob ” ! I should be inclined to venture on a plate of bird’s nest soup with chicken if it were disguised under the name of “ ying war gai larp tong,” and I should be ready to face even broiled pork steamed with cheese if it were known to me only as “ nan yoy kow yook.”

There is no use in pretending that names do not matter. They matter immensely to those of us who through long custom are doomed to live on meat. We like to think of the dishes on our tables, not as meat for ravenous carnivores, but almost as something specially created in the kitchen—something that has no relation to its past. Above all, we do not like to be told that we are eating offals. Life is disgusting enough without that. Let Lord Woolton see to it that a more comely name than that is found for our livers, kidneys and sweetbreads. Otherwise he may find his large stocks of meat becoming more and more unsaleable and the nation turning to a diet of turnip cutlets and carrot pie.

Y. Y.

BLACK MARKET

THE man who grows tomatoes at the corner of the road may establish a “ black market ” when he decides to sell direct to his next-door neighbour. The farmer in Kent who sold his cherries direct to passing motorists may have developed another. The milkman who slides a dozen eggs in along with the morning milk, and accepts a petrol coupon in return along with the price of the eggs, is certainly breaking the law. But these are petty and fiddling cases compared with the big stuff operating in the “ black markets.”

Some “ black markets ” were established on theft, pure and simple. But that is diminishing. The theft in the blackout of a loaded lorry from a warehouse is a game that was played out some time ago. Extra precautions have been taken since the first big hauls were made, and a closer guard is placed on supplies. (Incidentally, it has made conditions of long-distance lorry drivers worse. Now most of them are forbidden under penalty of instant dismissal, to pull up for refreshment during any part of their journeys, or to leave their lorries or loads for any purpose at all. The hitch-hiker, too, being a potential highwayman, comes within the employers’ ban, and hitch-hiking is not the game it used to be!)

There are still “ black market ” dealings on a tremendous wholesale scale, nevertheless. Most of the original transactions start off all open and above board. Cases of canned goods, canned fish, and unrationed goods in short supply, go out from manufacturers and shippers in perfect good faith to the wholesalers. That is where the trouble starts. The majority are old-established traders, concerned only with their usual trade. But many trading firms have sprung up, either as wholesalers or middlemen, to cater solely for the “ black market.” Their trade is done on a ready-cash basis, and they are always ready to accept any kind of delivery of canned fruits. The result is that many wholesalers are ready to allocate a small percentage of their legal supplies for the enhanced prices which the unlicensed middlemen are prepared to pay.

From time to time, these “ mushroom ” firms spring up, carry on for two months or so, and vanish: but they spring up again under different names, and trading from different premises. Some never handle merchandise at all, but act as agents only. A one-room office, with a telephone, is all they need, and it is often as not one of the partners in the firm who acts as clerk-telephonist.

Some of the suppliers of these “ mushroom ” trading organisations, however, act as roundsmen, collecting small supplies from retailers on whom they make their calls once or twice a week to pick up whatever might be going.

Branch managers of multiple stores—and co-operatives, too—are an effective source of supply for the small-change racketeer. I know of a case in which a man with many contacts in the distributive trade, told a grocery branch manager that he wanted one or two extras. “ If it’s rationed stuff you want, I can let you have it," was the apparently surprising answer, "But if it's unrationed goods in short supply, you'll be unlucky." The upshot was that without the slightest difficulty, and without coupons, he was supplied immediately with 1 lb. of butter, 4 lb. of sugar, ½ lb. of tea, and 1 lb of bacon.

The fact is that rationing does lend itself to this small-scale racketeering. The Board of Trade, for example, make allowances for "evaporation" petrol, roughly ten per cent., to the retailer. That is quite sufficient to provide a profitable and illegal "black market." People who boast they can get petrol whenever they want it, are most likely telling the truth. Many car owners arrange to lodge the whole of their coupons with a garage, and draw against the pool thus created. There is usually a favourable enough margin for the garage out of it. This pooling, of course, is quite illegal, but it doesn't seem quite as barefaced as buying it from an Army lorry-driver, and running the risk of being caught with dyed petrol in the tank.

Ministry of Food waste allowances to retailers are generous enough, too. A margin of 3 lb. a hundredweight is allowed for evaporation in connection with butter, an arrangement which is just sheer nonsense in these days of quick sales, as any retailer will privately admit. It is just that much a hundredweight which is immediately destined for illicit trading. But, in addition, butter is sold retail by gross weight, not net weight, and that means that the weight of the wrapping paper adds to the margin of extra butter.

But the retailer hasn't finished there. A practice that is coming more universally into favour among the distributive food trades is butter "whacking," the principle involved being to slap water into the butter before selling. Most keg, or kiel, or cask, butters coming from the creameries or factories, contain about 8 or 9 per cent. of water. The legal limit allowed for this type of butter is 16 per cent. (For "dairy butter" the amount of water allowed is 25 per cent!) It is a simple process to slap an extra 2 or 3 per cent. of water into the butter, remain within the limit the law allows, and "make" a spare 3 lb. of butter from each barrel.

There is still another avenue for the retailer to get spare butter, and other rationed goods. A trader should have sufficient coupons to account for the goods he has sold. But in practice he always has more. There are large numbers of registered customers who leave their ration books with their retailer and there is a small percentage, probably larger than is generally imagined, who do not consume their full weekly allowance of rationed commodities. Their coupons, however, are detached by the retailer, and the extra allowance goes into stock.

When coupons are sent in, they are not counted. They are weighed and no scrupulously careful check is made. Sometimes a sample count is taken, but that happens rarely. Shortage of staff at Food Offices is, in most cases, responsible for that.

The only rationed food of which the retailer has low stocks is sugar, for there are few people who do not take the whole of their sugar ration. Even so, there are simple means of book-keeping, well-known to all retail traders, which allow them to obtain small surplus supplies, which eventually aggregate to large hidden stores. You are likely to find less than one food retailer in ten, either proprietor, manager, or assistant, whose domestic consumption of rationed goods is limited to the ration.

In "black market" distribution, book-keeping and controlled prices become a sheer farce. Everything on the invoice is right—when an invoice is supplied. And it usually is. The quantities are right, the prices strictly in accordance with the controls. But the "consideration" money does not figure on the bill. Nor are cheques accepted, or offered. The motto is "strictly cash" for the excess charges.

It is not difficult to get circumstantial evidence, but the law likes to have more than that. So do the Ministry of Food. The Ministry know who the principal "black market" artistes are, they know how they work, and where they work. They are getting to know whom they supply, and prosecutions are becoming refreshingly frequent. That's not a sign that the "black market" is growing. It's a sign that the Ministry of Food are becoming more alert. But the surest way of attacking the "black market" would be to limit the cost of hotel meals.

ANDREW HARDY

THE MOVIES

"Tom, Dick and Harry," at the London Pavilion and the Marble Arch Pavilion.

Soviet Films at the Tatler.

A little while ago there was a Deanna Durbin week in the suburbs, with a different film to go back to every night. Delectable must have been the occasion to pin oneself to the past, to brush up one's Hollywood, to note that this song was vintage '38 and that admirer reached the scene in '39, to revive the pangs of growing up and to know that one's idol had accomplished this with hardly a break. Miss Durbin goes on like Johnnie Walker, and in fact, with a little help from Laughton, is capturing new hearts at the moment. But her films don't, it must be admitted, amount to very much; she has to spend as she goes; adolescence to-day, motherhood to-morrow, and no doubt the Durbin week of 1980 will provide a nice gallery of old ladies who have triumphed in opera.

I couldn't help thinking of the Royalty of the screen, with their thrones to look after and continuous present to keep up, as I watched Ginger Rogers in *Tom, Dick and Harry* doing (apparently) just as she pleased, acting with abandon and fooling around, behaving outrageously, fishing up odd scraps of adolescence, flying off into daydreams, being silly and charming, and herself and a caricature of herself. After all, Miss Rogers (no Weeks for her!) *has* a past to fish over, has corners no one has ever seen into, and this *trouvaille* is the life of every film she makes. Suppose, ten years ago, she had been paraded as a tomboy with a pigtail, what would have come to-day to those elastic strings attaching her to childhood? It is fearful to think what *Tom, Dick and Harry* might have been without Miss Rogers's resilience. But she danced with Astaire, she made strides with her acting and dived here and there in memory, she has played tomboy and tart and the girl with horizons, and here she is a telephone operator, irresistibly silly, dreaming of marriage. Three lovers press their claims—a garage mechanic, a rising salesman, a millionaire with his own plane—and she delightedly gets herself engaged to all three. Sometimes they're all there; sometimes one breaks his date with her to sell another a car; sometimes two are sitting on the steps of her house wondering about the third. It is preposterous, but the contacts and background are brilliantly lifelike, and at any moment the wildest daydream may come to earth with an insistent ring of the vernacular. Ginger Rogers carries off her share triumphantly, and inspires Burgess Meredith, as the lowliest of the lovers, to a small performance almost equally exuberant. *Tom, Dick and Harry* owes a lot to the good direction of Garson Kanin, who shows here a real friskiness of touch. This is a film I've enjoyed once, and could enjoy again.

The second Soviet programme at the Tatler includes two striking documentaries: one, "Soviet Frontiers on the Danube," compiled from actual filming of the Red Army occupation of Bessarabia in 1940; the other a reconstructed incident of a hundred Jugoslavs condemned by the Nazis to be shot and ordered to dig their own graves, who turn on their torturers with spades.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Bring out your dead
PAPER

Correspondence

THAT IRISH PROBLEM

SIR,—Why is it that Ireland viewed from the British side of the Irish Sea is always shrouded with obscuring mist? Even Mr. James Bridie's creation of a dream Dublin shows a first-hand investigator betrayed into inaccuracy though he gives the authentic glow and stir of this ancient city.

Boule de Suif was never produced at the Abbey. It was done at the Gate Theatre by the Edwards-MacLiammoir Company. There was never any question of interference by a board of censors. The play was taken off, as announced at the time, at the request of the Minister for Justice, on moral grounds.

If it is difficult to get at the truth of a plain, matter-of-fact recent event of this kind, how much more difficult when it is a matter of the fluid thought which governs the attitude of Irish Ministers and people to current events. In Britain there is general acceptance of the need to defend democracy even when the shortcomings of its present practice are well understood. In Ireland there is no such widespread fervour. On the contrary, the orthodox view is that an authoritarian regime has much to commend it. Democracy and dictatorship are looked at dispassionately as systems of government which may be of value in different circumstances. The idea that democracy is essential to personal liberty—without which life is worth little—does not commend itself to any influential group in Ireland. The recent measure imposing State control and registration of trade unions, requiring them to get a licence from a tribunal before they can act as bargaining bodies, illustrates the Irish view.

Here is something which marks a fundamental difference. Britain has slowly built up a regime of parliamentary government. This has coloured political life and thought, giving it cohesion and direction. In Ireland for generations there have been alternating phases of revolt and coercion. A regime which began with civil war less than twenty years ago has not had time—even with inclination—to build a strong democratic tradition.

Discontent in Britain normally flows into political channels, while in Ireland the tendency has been for it to become an armed conspiracy. Along with this all kinds of inflammable material is lying around in the shape of slogans and traditions hostile to Britain which have grown out of the age-long struggle for national independence. Looking at this it is clear that any other attitude but that of neutrality would lead inevitably to serious internal dissension and possibly civil war. It is these considerations which have made every responsible party and organ of public opinion in Eire support the Government in its neutrality policy.

Eire has built up a relatively strong defence force equivalent on a population basis—so Mr. de Valera has claimed—to an army of 8,000,000 in the United States. But this force is necessarily weak compared with the militarised power of the great nations. Dublin and other vital parts of Eire are vulnerable from the air, if not from the sea. So Irish strategy has aimed at the strict avoidance of belligerency. De Valera's calculation has been that if Eire follows a policy of genuine neutrality it may not be worth the while of the dictator states to attack, and so solidify Irishmen at home and abroad against them.

Irish policy to-day is based on (1) lack of enthusiasm for democracy; (2) the need to avoid internal dissension; (3) recognition of its weakness as a small State. While the existence of the border is a constant irritation, it has not the importance to the present situation which Mr. Denis Ireland and others assume. No amount of juggling with the border—bringing Northern Ireland half into the State and Eire half into the war—will be satisfactory. In the matter of wars or States it must be all or nothing.

Not being a military strategist I cannot measure the value of the Irish ports to the forces of democracy. But any attempt to use those ports against Germany means attack from without and turmoil within. That is the essence of the Irish problem. Of course, Eire may be the victim of sudden attack at any time. If that should happen the situation would be transformed. But the first essential is to grasp the considerations which govern Irish policy now.

R. M. FOX

39 The Rise,
Griffith Avenue, Dublin.

WAGE EQUALITY

Sir,—With reference to the letter of "Sales Manager" and lower payment for skilled work than for unskilled work, I should like to air the grievance of my employee. I own a small mixed farm and employ one skilled man who can do any of the varied farm jobs, including ploughing, harrowing, sowing, stone walling, hedging, ditching, carpentering, and care of stock and machinery. He has all information at the tip of his tongue, the rate of seeding per acre of any crop, when to sow and how deep to cover the seeds; he can estimate the weight of a stack of hay or a pig, the number of loads of stones required to build a wall, and so on.

I pay him five shillings above the agricultural minimum wage and give him also his dinner and tea. These wages are not high, but are actually more than the land can "carry," and are high for the district, where most of the farm labour is still "hired" by the year and the men are housed and fed and paid a yearly wage of perhaps £50–£75.

Recently the R.A.F. and the Army have invaded the district, they have taken over the best fields from a number of farms—the flat fields adjoining the roads in this hilly country—and are building camps.

The camps employ labour at 1*s.* 4*d.* per hour and the men earn £3 10*s.* to £4 a week. Those employed are mainly the village "pensioners," men who for the past five or ten years have lived very comfortably on the dole.

My man, who was more active in looking for work, had been working for a while for a mason before coming to me. Now, as he has begun to work regularly on the land, he is tied to the land.

He sees "the lame, the halt, the blind" working at the camp for £1 a week more than he is able to earn. The fact that his work is more interesting and soul satisfying is beside the point. He knows that he is a better workman than the men earning £3 15*s.* a week, and that they could not do his work here.

He has been born on the land and lived on the land all his life, and is not given to jealousy or grumbling, but he feels strongly that as the Government have such arbitrary powers that they can tie a man to his job, they could also conscript labour for the camp work at prices not exceeding that paid locally to other workmen, or, alternatively, pay everyone a soldier's wage, with allowances.

Woman Farmer

WOMEN'S WORK

Sir,—In the Soviet Union, Sir Walter Citrine tells us, the factories are staffed by women to the extent of 65-75 per cent. Why cannot we get the women into industry like that? Why do young girls evade service? Can we learn from Soviet practice?

I think we can. Because our failure to date to organise 100 per cent. production for total warfare is due less to any want of patriotism than to lack of suitable conditions to attract women. Take two simple examples. First, women here are paid less then men, and relegated mainly to dull repetition jobs. In the Soviet Union, however, they are paid "the rate for the job," whatever it is, and they can and do rise to be managers of factories, railways, ship captains and air pilots.

Secondly, the woman with a family (or wanting one) can hardly be encouraged by the revelation that we have, after two years of "fighting for our lives," only 163 nurseries providing for 6,000 children whose parents are at work! In the Soviet Union as long ago as 1935, places were provided in creches *at the place of work* for 5,143,600 children. In this manner women are able to combine the interests of their family with that of a career on terms of equality with men.

It is time our women were allowed out of their Victorian swaddling clothes; only thus can we win this war of production. "Mere Man"

MEDICAL EDUCATION

Sir,—Dr. Roberts in your issue of Nov. 8, contributes a penetrating analysis of the curriculum for medical qualification in this country. While I agree with him that this period of training is longer than that required for any other profession, we, nevertheless, remain less burdened in this respect than our professional colleagues in the United States, according to a recent report by an authoritative Commission set up by the Association of American Medical Colleges, in 1924, and reporting in 1932. This is a most valuable study, too little known, of the whole problem of medical education, and includes an examination of conditions in Europe and Canada, as well as in the United States. It is noted that there is a growing tendency in all the better known medical colleges in the States to require that the student, before embarking on professional study, shall have had a "full college training" (three years) ensuring a "sound general education" which should not have a "preprofessional purpose." These requirements, together with progressive increases in the medical course itself, "are tending to lengthen the training for medicine to about ten years." By the latest revision of the British curriculum, effected in 1938, by the General Medical Council, which is the statutory body charged with the control of medical education in this country, the course now to be followed is thus laid down:

The "premedical" subjects (the examination in which is called the "first medical") must be mastered *before* "registration" as a medical student is permitted, and to allow of this, registration is delayed until the student reaches 18, and the professional training proper is now dated from the passing of this examination, and not, as previously, from passing the matriculation or equivalent entrance test, which can still be taken at 16. The two years thus appropriated for the study of the premedical sciences (chemistry, biology, physics) in effect make that addition to the medical course which, with the five years still exacted for the preclinical and clinical training, means a nominal requirement of seven years. The majority of medical students wisely endeavour to put in six months or a year in hospital appointments after qualification and before entering upon practice, so that it may be said that the British student of medicine must budget for something like eight years of preparation for his profession.

House of Commons. E. Graham-Little, M.D., F.R.C.P.

RETRIBUTION

Sir,—In reply to my letter about Mr. Churchill's and Mr. Roosevelt's declarations on the necessity of retribution, Mr. Lanson replies that after the last war the economic punishment of Germany served no useful purpose and evidently did not deter. I do not understand what that has to do with the declarations in question. We all agree, I suppose, that the economic clauses of the Versailles Treaty were extremely unfortunate.

The declarations were necessary in order to make the peoples of the enslaved countries understand that the punishment of war criminals will be taken seriously. If the victims of oppression are led to believe that only Hitler and a few of the other arch criminals will be prosecuted, they may take justice into their own hands. I am afraid that in those parts of Europe where tens of thousands have been murdered, massacres of Germans will take place in any case. It is our duty to prevent or at least limit the uncontrolled punishment of war criminals as far as possible. The only way of doing so is to make the populations of occupied Europe sure that the criminals, whether they be commissars or sadistics in charge of prisons and concentration camps, will be brought before a court.

Norwegian

GLASGOW'S BUS STOPPAGE

Sir,—Referring to the comments of your Industrial Correspondent on above in your issue of 22nd instant, I would like to correct any wrong impression that may be created in the minds of your readers. Your correspondent states that the strike began as a protest against the dismissal of a couple of men who had refused to obey orders they regarded as unreasonable. The facts are:—

On Friday, 7th November, the Garage Clerk at the Knightswood Garage phoned the head office to say that four bus drivers wished to form themselves into a deputation and come to the head office to discuss the new duty schedules due to come into operation two days later. As these drivers were due to take up duty they were instructed to communicate with the Union officials in the usual way. When they did so they were advised to await instructions as an endeavour was being made to get them released. Without waiting for a decision, however, the men came to the city, as a result of which their buses failed to run. For this offence the men were suspended for the day. Subsequently any further action was deferred to allow the real question at issue being dealt with, but in spite of this the employees decided to cease work without notice against the Union officials' instructions.

The full story of the events that followed is much too lengthy and involved to discuss in your columns. It is sufficient to say that the duties complained of were the subject of negotiations for many weeks during June and July of this year and an agreement was arrived at through the N.J.I.C. for the Transport Industry and accepted by both sides.

To suggest that such an agreement should be scrapped at a day's notice just when it was due to operate was quite unreasonable and the negation of the principle of collective bargaining. There is also a much wider question involved, namely, as to whether communal trading can continue to function efficiently if threats and pressure are to take the place of negotiations and agreements.

Glasgow Corporation Transport Committee. James Welsh, Sub-Convener.

BLOCKADE

Sir,—Widespread publicity was given lately to the fact that German consumption, especially of clothes, has been further cut. If the cut in German consumption could really be attributed to the lack of specific raw materials which cannot be used for any other purpose, and if it entailed the unemployment of those hitherto used for their production or finishing, this rejoicing would be comprehensible. But this is not the case. There are alternative tasks to which the man-power can and is being put. And the cut in German consumption means not so much the dearth of raw materials as the determination of the Nazis to maintain war production, in spite of the tremendous call on their man-power by the Russian campaign. This calls not for rejoicing (except over the tremendous aid Russia gives to us), but to determined exertions on our part!

Or are we to rejoice in the knowledge that our children still play with British toys made by skilled British engineers, that hats are still untouched by the war, that millions of people can still indulge in peace-time activities and pleasures (including the planning of reconstruction!) When will the Ministry of Economic Warfare realise that this is not the way to induce people to face the bitter facts of this struggle? Or to restore confidence in its predictions so disastrously rebutted by the events of the past years? Our blockade has been playing, and still plays, an important rôle in reducing the productivity of German labour. But it is folly to suggest, even by implication, that the magnitude of the Nazi war effort as it is does not require substantial further efforts on our part. T. Balogh

ARMY EDUCATION

Sir,—Anyone who has had experience of education in the Army will agree with Mr. Blenkinsop's remarks on the way the new ABCA scheme is not working. But before we demand an "enlarged" Army Educational Corps to tackle the job, why not give the necessary "authority" to those unfortunate individuals who are already in the A.E.C.? In my experience—which covers a whole Area—A.E.C. Sergeants are among the most deeply "browned off" men in the Army. They spend their evenings on classes, discussions and other "educational" activities, most of which appeal to an infinitesimal few, and their daytime hours in making work for themselves, hawking their wares, taking in one another's washing, and seizing the odd crumbs of Map Reading instruction which a busy Training Unit deigns to let fall from its table. Nothing would please them better than a full daytime job, and when they heard of the new ABCA scheme they threw up their hats in anticipation. But no—ABCA is the preserve of the Regimental Officer, and therefore is usually not done, or done very little, or done badly. All the A.E.C. men are saying "Give us the job and we'll supply the tools."

Civilian Lecturer

WASHING

Sir,—Please let me endorse Y. Y.'s liking for clothes lines. I wish he could see the washings which the westerly gales whip to and fro in the island gardens, as several of the islanders have families of nine or ten children. R.A.F. shirts dance side by side with rows of home-knitted jerseys and woollen socks graded like the three bears' bowls. In summer, blankets shared the sunny side of the dyke with fishing nets. The R.A.F. Met. Officer and my Gaelic landlady run neck and neck in foretelling drying-day weather, and Mrs. MacKinnon's predictions, given after a look at the peat smoke and the boats swinging in the harbour, are often more accurate that the officer's scientific conclusions. I. Innes, A/S/O.,

R.A.F. Station, W.A.A.F.

Somewhere off the W. Coast of Scotland.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

The leaves fly down, the rain spits and the clouds flow like a dirty thaw before the wind, which whines and mews in the window cracks and swings the wireless aerial with a dull tap against the sill; the House of Usher is falling, and between now and Hogmanay, as the draughts lift the carpets, as slates shift on the roof and mice patter behind the wainscot, the ghosts increase. It is their moment. It is also the moment to read those ghosts of all ghosts, the minor novelists who write about the supernatural. Pushed into limbo by the great with their grandiose and blatant passion for normality, these minor talents flicker about plaintively on the edges of fame, often excelling the masters with a phrase or a character, but never large enough to take the centre of the stage. Such a writer is J. Sheridan Le Fanu. In mid-Victorian literature Le Fanu is crowded out by Dickens and Thackeray, talked off the floor by Lever, that supreme raconteur, surpassed or (should one say?) by-passed on his own ground by Wilkie Collins, yet he has, all the same, an individual accent, the almost perfunctory accomplishment of a talent vital enough to be worth detaching for a while from the Victorian din. At least one of his books, a collection of tales republished twelve years ago with Ardizzone's illustrations and entitled *In a Glass Darkly*,[*] is worth reading; his other books show that, like so many talented Irishmen, he had gifts, but too many voices and raised too many echoes.

Ghosts and peculiar mysteries are Le Fanu's subjects. He brought a bubbling tributary to the Teutonic stream which had fed romantic literature for so long. I do not mean that he married the banshee to the poltergeist or the monster in some Irish graveyard; what he did was to bring an Irish lucidity and imagination to the turgid Germanic flow. Le Fanu's ghosts are what I take to be the most disquieting of all: the ghosts that can be justified and which are not irresponsible and perambulatory figments of family history, mooning and clanking about in fancy dress. Their evil is not sportive, wilful, involuntary or extravagant. In Le Fanu effect follows cause. Guilt patters two-legged behind its victims in the street, retribution sits adding up its account night after night, the secret doubt scratches away with malignant patience in the guarded mind. We laugh at the headless coachman or the legendary heiress grizzling her way through the centuries in her nightgown; but we pause, when we recognise that those other hands on the wardrobe, those other eyes at the window, those other steps on the landing and those small shadows that slip into the room as we open the door, are our own. It is we who are the ghosts. Those are *our* own steps which follow us, it is *our* "heavy body" which we hear falling in the attic above. We haunt ourselves. Let illness or strain weaken the catch which we keep fixed so tightly upon the subconscious, and out spring all the hags and animals of moral or Freudian symbolism, just as the "Elemental" burns sharp as a diamond before our eyes when we lie relaxed and on the point of sleep.

Some such idea is behind most of Le Fanu's tales. They are presented as the cases of a psychiatrist called Dr. Helvetius, whose precise theory appears to be that these fatal visitations come when the psyche is worn to rags and the interior spirit world can then make contact through the holes. A touch of science, even bogus science, gives an edge to superstitious stories. The coarse hanging judge is tracked down by the man whom he has unjustly hanged and is hanged in turn. The eupeptic sea captain on the point of marrying an Irish fortune, is quietly terrorised to death by the sailor whom, years before, he had had flogged to death in Malta. The fashionable and handsome clergyman is driven to suicide by the persecutions of a phantom monkey who jumps into his Bible as he preaches, and waits for him at street corners, in carriages, in his very room. A very Freudian animal this, dark and hairy with original sin and symbolism, straight from the unchastity of a pious bachelor's unconscious. Even the vampire girl who preys on the daughter of an Austrian count appears to be displaying the now languid, now insatiate, sterility of Lesbos. I am not, however, advancing Le Fanu as an instance of the lucky moralist who finds a sermon in every spook, but as an artist in the dramatic use of the evil, the secret and the inevitable, an artist, indeed, in the domestication of the supernatural. With him it does not break the law, but extends the mysterious jurisdiction of nature.

Le Fanu might be described as the Simenon of the peculiar. There is the same limpid narrative. He is expert in screwing up tension little by little without strain, and in surprise. The literature of the uncanny can easily surprise by outraging our senses and our experience; but the masters of it stick to the simple, the *almost* natural, and let fall their more unnerving revelations as if they were all in the day's work. The clergyman has already described the ghostly monkey which has been persecuting him. He comes to the second part of the story:

> "All lights are the same to me," he said. "Except when I read or write, I care not if night were perpetual. I am going to tell you what happened about a year ago. The thing began to speak to me."

There is Henry James's *second* turn of the screw.

We progress indeed not into vagueness and atmosphere, but into greater and greater particularity; with every line the net grows tighter. Another sign of the master is Le Fanu's equable eye for the normal. There is a sociability about his stories, a love of pleasure, a delight in human happiness, a tolerance of folly and a real psychological perception. Only in terms of the vampire legend would the Victorians have permitted a portrayal of Lesbian love, but how lightly, skilfully and justly it is told. Vigilance is a word Le Fanu often uses. We feel a vigilance of observation in all his character drawing, we are aware of a fluid and quick sensibility which responds only to the essential things in people and in the story. He is as detached as a *dompteur*; he caresses, he bribes, he laughs, he cracks the whip. It is a sinister but gracious performance.

One doesn't want to claim too much for Le Fanu. For most of his life he was a Dublin journalist and versatility got the better of him. He is known for two of his many novels: *Uncle Silas* and *The House by the Churchyard*. *Uncle Silas* has ingenious elements. Le Fanu saw the possibility of the mysterious in the beliefs and practices of the Swedenborgians, but the book goes downhill halfway through and becomes a crime puzzle. A good man dies and puts his daughter in his brother's care, knowing this brother to be popularly thought a murderer. By this reckless act the good man hopes to clear his brother's name. On the contrary, it puts an idea into his head. This brother, Uncle Silas, has married beneath him, and the picture of his illiterate family has a painful rawness which is real enough; but such a sinister theme requires quiet treatment, and Le Fanu is too obviously sweating along in the footsteps of Dickens or Wilkie Collins. Lever is another echo. It is his voice, the voice of the stage Irishman which romps rather too nuttily about *The House by the Churchyard*, into which Le Fanu seems to have thrown every possible side of his talent without discrimination. There are ghosts you shrink from, ghosts you laugh at, cold murder is set beside comic duels, wicked characters become ridiculous, ridiculous ones become solemn and we are supposed to respect them. It is all a very strange mixture, and Sterne and Thackeray, as well as Lever, seem to be adding their hand. A good deal is farcical satire of the military society in eighteenth-century Dublin, and Le Fanu is dashing and gaudy with a broad brush:

> Of late Mrs. Macnamara had lost all her pluck and half her colour, and some even of her fat. She was like one of those portly dowagers in Nubernip's select society of metamorphosed turnips, who suddenly exhibited sympathetic symptoms of failure, grew yellow, flabby and wrinkled, as the parent bulb withered and went out of season.

His comic subalterns, scheming land agents and quarrelling doctors, his snoring generals and shrill army wives, are drawn close up, so close up that it is rather bewildering until you are used to the jumpy and awkward angles of his camera. One gets a confused, life-size impression, something like the impression made by a crowded picture of Rowlandson's, where so much is obviously happening that one can't be sure exactly what it is and where to begin. Le Fanu was spreading himself as Lever had done, but was too soaked in the journalist's restless habits to know how to define his narrative. He became garrulous where Lever was the raconteur. He rambles on like some rumbustious reporter who will drop into some graceful sketch of trout fishing on the Liffey or into fragments of rustic idyll and legend, and then returns to his duels, his hell-fire oaths and his claret. I can see that this book has a flavour, but I could never get through it. The truth is that Le Fanu, the journalist, could not be trusted to *accumulate* a novel. You can see in *Uncle Silas* how the process bored him, and how that book is really a good short story that has unhappily got itself into the family way. His was a talent for brevity, the poetic sharpness and discipline of the short tale, for the subtleties and symbolism of the uncanny. In this form Le Fanu is a good deal more than a ghost among the ghosts.

V. S. Pritchett

MYSTICISM AND POLITICS

Grey Eminence. By Aldous Huxley. *Chatto and Windus.* 15*s*.

François Leclerc du Tremblay, known in religion as *le Père* Joseph, and nicknamed *l'Eminence grise*, is a singular figure whose lineaments it has hitherto been most difficult to distinguish: the Life by Fagniez, which I have looked at, is all but unreadable, the rival Life, by Dedouvres, is all but inaccessible. Mr. Huxley deserves our gratitude for writing a biography that is, as one would expect, lucid, scholarly and thoughtful. The singularity of Father Joseph is that he was at once a mystic and a Machiavel. He founded an order of contemplative nuns, whom he never ceased to direct on the arduous path of self-annihilation; and he was no less responsible than Richelieu for fomenting and prolonging the most destructive war in European history, a war, moreover, but for which the Protestant heresy might have been extirpated as entirely as the Albigensian or the Donatist. The ambitious Richelieu cannot surprise us by his fervent and unscrupulous nationalism, but Father Joseph, dividing his energies between power politics and the technique of mysticism, appears a paradox or a double personality.

Mr. Huxley has used all his ingenuity in seeking to explain this extraordinary character. Father Joseph, he argues, was led by the circumstances of his birth and education to believe in the divine mission of France. He was obsessed by a longing for a Crusade to recover the Holy Land, and when the Spanish Court would not adhere to this international project, he became more than ever convinced that the cause of the Church depended on the domination of Europe by France. Indifferent to the ordinary temptations of the world, he succumbed to the subtler bait of vicarious ambition. Aware that he wanted nothing but the satisfactions of mystical experience—for compared with these all other satisfactions are negligible—he accepted political activity as a cross. It must be right, just because it was disagreeable. And thus this passionate Catholic was led into a career in which he summoned Protestant armies to kill good Papists, and attempted even to make the hated Turk his ally against the Christians of Austria and Spain.

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[*] *In a Glass Darkly.* By J. Sheridan Le Fanu. Illus. by Ardizzone. Peter Davies. 12*s*. 6*d*.

Father Joseph seems to have been less disturbed by these inconsistencies than Mr. Huxley allows. Towards the end of his life, it is true, he poured out to an abbess his regrets. "I know by personal experience—I, who, in punishment for my faults and for having misused the time God gave me, have now so little leisure to think of my inward being and am for ever distracted by a host of different occupations—I know how bad it is not to be united to God, not to give one's soul into the possession of the spirit of Jesus, to be led according to his will. . . ." But even if these words represent more than a mood, or a desire to edify the abbess, even if they signify deep repentance for not concentrating upon the mystical way, they betray no contrition for the immeasurable sufferings caused by his policy, or for the use of heretics to kill Catholics. It was reported that to console Father Joseph's dying moments Richelieu told him, untruthfully, that the enemy fortress of Breisach had at last fallen. Mr. Huxley surprisingly omits this well-known story; if he disbelieves it he surely should have told us so. But if authentic, it suggests that Father Joseph remained till his end unrepentantly preoccupied with politics.

In this book Mr. Huxley repeatedly declares that mysticism is the only cure for human ills. "The methods of goodness-politics combined with individual training in theocentric theory and contemplative practice alone provide the means whereby human societies can become a little less unsatisfactory than they have been up to the present. . . . Society can never be greatly improved, until such time as most of its members choose to become theocentric saints." It therefore shows a remarkable and positively scientific honesty in him that he should call our attention to a career that appears to contradict his theory. But this is intended as an example, in the proper sense, of the exception proving the rule. Father Joseph, he maintains, fell into his error only because he had not progressed far enough on the mystic way. Deviating from the true mysticism exhibited in such works as *The Cloud of Unknowing*, he followed Benet of Canfield and Pierre de Bérulle in meditating upon the Passion instead of concentrating exclusively upon the non-human manifestation of God. He thus attained the "non-personal strength" that made his political success possible, but fell short of the perfection or total self-abnegation that must have preserved him from his Machiavellian activities. I am quite incompetent to criticise this theory, but in his considerations upon mystical technique, which are as near clarity as the subject allows, Mr. Huxley does strike me as a little self-assured. On these very hard matters he does not so much suggest a hypothesis as lay down the law. He forgets to be a historian and becomes a propagandist. It is possible that he and Mr. Heard have discovered facts about mystical technique and experience hitherto hidden from the Western world, but the tone in which he propounds his views does not conciliate the still unconvinced enquirer. Occasionally, moreover, he makes assertions that one is able to test: "The results," he declares, "of any plan of action are always unknown and unknowable; the plan must be pursued for its own sake, as an end in itself. This is the bald truth about politics. . . ." But what is a plan except a method of attaining results? If a plan is pursued for its own sake, it ceases to be a method and becomes an end. In politics, moreover, most plans entail inconvenience or suffering for somebody, but abstention from action may cause greater inconvenience or suffering. In surgery, similarly, a major operation entails loss of blood, shock and usually pain: it is a plan that is pursued not for its own sake but for its probable results, because the results of not operating are thought likely to be worse.

It is in fact untrue, I suggest, to maintain that if the means are not good in themselves they can attain no good end. If a pacificist argues that war causes more suffering than appeasement, or that non-resistance would convert Hitler, I can accept his logic, though I disagree with his premises. But if he argues that it must be wrong to make war because this entails the use of bad means, which can never attain a good end, he seems to me unreasonable. For to preserve or regain peace, bad means may also be necessary. The French Government, for instance, had to surrender German refugees to the Gestapo. I know that the pacificist is ready to die for his beliefs—is he also ready to hand over to Himmler's mercy refugees, Jews and everyone else of whom the Nazis disapprove? Would not this be a bad means of pursuing a good end? In politics very often the choice is not between good means and bad means, but between two sets of bad means.

I take this instance because Mr. Huxley, in his comments on the Thirty Years War, seems to be implicitly condemning our action in this war. He frankly admits that a world made safe for totalitarianism would be very unsafe for the mass-mysticism in which he, so pessimistically, sees the only hope for mankind. But I gather that he remains a pacificist. Non-violence has become an end in itself, an idol for which the future of man, if necessary, must be immolated. The Christian Scientist, as Mr. H. A. L. Fisher pointed out, survives only because the public authorities do not share his views, and therefore take precautions about disease and infection. The pacificist mystic is similarly individualist when he condemns those upon whose intrinsically undesirable activities the future of mysticism depends. Is it not morally more elegant to drop bombs than, while profiting, however unwillingly, by the bombs, to insist on keeping one's own hands clean? The summit of saintliness may be to sacrifice one's personal perfection to save the souls of others. At the end of Mr. Huxley's book I felt that there was, after all, something to be said for Father Joseph. Having decided, however mistakenly, that a particular end was desirable, he was not so spiritually self-centred as to leave the dirty work to other people.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

MR. CHURCHILL

Mr. Churchill: A Portrait. By PHILIP GUEDALLA. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 8s. 6d.

The biography of a living statesman is almost bound to be a failure. Reticences must be observed; documents are not available; the perspective which time alone can give is rarely capable of anticipation by a contemporary. It says a good deal for Mr. Guedalla that, with all these grave handicaps, he has failed so manfully. His book is interesting, partly, of course, because its subject is interesting, but, partly, also, because Mr. Guedalla has been content to supply an outline and has managed, with only an occasional deviation, not to be unduly tempted by the occasions for fine and picturesque writing Mr. Churchill's career so amply yields. He has narrated a story; he has not sought to provide an explanation. And he has hardly offered a pinch of incense on the altar of Mr. Lytton Strachey. Granted the delicacies of his problem, his book must be pronounced a very attractive failure. That is really a considerable achievement.

But the book does not yield us the secret of Mr. Churchill; perhaps we shall not have it for another generation. Some of the elements of the secret we can see—the adventurer's courage, the romantic's zest for life at a high temperature, the true autocrat's compassion—the real source of Mr. Churchill's occasional liberalism—the national soldier's impatience for action in the field. Mr. Churchill is a personality in the same ultimate sense that some half-dozen historic figures are personalities in British history—we may love them or hate them, we cannot remain unaffected by them. He has made himself, ever since the Boer war, part of the inevitable background of our lives. We have always been anxious to know what he is doing, and what he is going to do. We are impressed by his inexhaustible energy, his immense gusto with which he drinks at the fount of life, his incurable and half-boyish eagerness always to be up and doing, and mostly to be doing something new. He always makes us take notice of the fact that he is there. We like his unaffected joy in the battle. We are moved by his inner power to rise above the buffetings of fate. He is often wrong-headed, often blind, sometimes too prejudiced even to know that he is ignorant. But we feel alive in his vividness. We feel energetic by contact with his exertions. We are steeled by his resolution and elated by his audacity. Say what one may against the Prime Minister, no one can deny that he is in the full sense a man.

I think his defects are gigantic. He rarely listens to other people if he can have the privilege of listening to himself; and he is one of the supreme talkers of our time. He has a mind that thinks, if it possibly can, in rhetorical terms; images, metaphors, analogies, pour from him in an unceasing torrent. He is so quick to form a conclusion that the power to ponder over the foundations of his thought is usually denied him. Opposition tends to make him obstinate; it does not easily persuade him to self-scrutiny. He is so much the man of action that, even when he writes, one can see him marshal his sentences as though they were soldiers on a parade-ground. He has the politician's vice of believing that when he has mastered a brief, he knows a subject. He finds it difficult to discover limitations in those who have been loyal to him; and that tends to make him quick to emphasise the limitations in their critics. He does not easily learn his way about the things that do not interest him—and little really interests him in the world of economic life. He belongs to the race of the Whig oligarchs of the eighteenth century. He has, therefore, a profound respect for Parliament, but he expects Parliament to think in terms of a society shaped by, and conforming to, that Whig tradition. He loves the feel of power, its trappings and its excitement. He sees history as great battles between great personalities, so that their relation to the vast impersonal forces of history raises problems that he has never seen and could only, I think, with difficulty be brought to understand.

Yet his virtues are not less gigantic than his defects. His own courage is matchless, and it enables him to respond to courage in others. He knows the spell of a great idea, and he will spend himself relentlessly in its service. He hates cruelty with a loathing that goes to the root of his nature. He has the gift of arousing passionate loyalties in those who work with him, and the generosity to give them full credit for their collaboration. He has imagination; and when his interest is deeply aroused that imagination is both sensitive and profound. His will is made of steel; and if he drives others relentlessly, it is no more than the price he exacts from himself. Though he can be hard, and even ruthless, his capacity for tenderness is profound. Not least, he has the power of the natural leader to fuse the whole of himself with the cause for which he is fighting. That is why he has symbolised Britain in this hour with a completeness which no other man in our history has surpassed. He is a good friend and a clean foe. If the horizon of his ideas is bounded by the traditions of the past to which he belongs rather than extended by the inspiration of that future he might make, he stands for what is best in that tradition as it is interpreted by a romantic aristocrat to whom the greatness of Britain is a religious passion.

Arrogant, ambitious, resolute, unbreakable, self-confident, all that he is he gives to the thing for which he cares; he lives for it; and, if need be, he would die for it too. And because the Britain that he lives for has its fate inescapably intertwined with that of freedom, the driving motive of his effort makes his immense faults of less importance than his supreme virtues. He has Chatham's majestic power to win the confidence of the people; and, at least till the victory is won, nothing will deflect him from its devotion to the vital end.

HAROLD J. LASKI

THE VICTIMS

Quest: The Evolution of a Scientist. By LEOPOLD INFELD. *Gollancz.* 12s. 6d.
Second Wind. By CARL ZUCKMAYER. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.
Wanderer Between Two Worlds. By NORMAN BENTWICH. *Kegan Paul.* 12s. 6d.
As It Happened. By MAURICE B. RECKITT. *Dent.* 12s. 6d.

Quest is by far the best of these four autobiographies since it is not only the honest story of a varied and important life, but also an admirable analysis of one aspect of racial persecution. Dr. Infeld, now internationally famous as a collaborator of Einstein, experienced "liberal" anti-Semitism in almost clinical perfection. Born in the Cracow Ghetto, and attaining first the right to attend university lectures and finally his doctorate in the face of immense artificial and accidental difficulties, he encountered at every stage an increasing and protean opposition. Since in Poland anti-Semitism was not at that time an official policy, but emanated rather from popular sentiment than governmental decree, it was not possible openly to discriminate against him because of his race, but necessary to find some other means of keeping him from a professorship. The whole tortuous medieval machinery of the Polish universities—as formalised and corrupt as eighteenth-century Oxford without its compensating laxity—was invoked to this end, even to the extent of abolishing a Chair, so that its owner could be transferred to another on which Dr. Infeld himself had a claim. At last, as Nazism waxed over the frontier and physical Jew-baiting spread to the lecture-theatres, he gave up the hopeless struggle, went to America with Einstein's assistance, and is to-day, ambition realised at last, a Professor of Applied Mathematics at Toronto University. The story of how a working-class Jew in a turbulent and backward country succeeded in becoming a famous physicist is merely the skeleton of a lively and variegated book. There is matter for many tastes. Dr. Infeld, an unwilling and incompetent conscript, scrounging his way out of active service with the ingenuity of a Good Soldier Schweik, and even succeeding in getting his discharge as a hopeless mental defective; Einstein receiving ambassadors in his carpet slippers, demolishing gravity with his trouser-buttons undone, and exhibiting a curious blend of the saint and the comic-strip professor; the confabulations of Polish dons and the eccentricities of their English counterparts, are all presented with a detached and satiric zest that goes far to compensate for the Sunday-press sentimentality of certain passages and the occasional slickness of the essays in self-analysis. For the most part, Dr. Infeld tells his story remarkably well, with the fluent lucidity that is often characteristic of artists and scientists when writing about themselves. He regards physics, which, on his own admission, he originally embraced as an escape from unpleasant reality, primarily as a pure aesthetic whose practical value is remote and largely incidental. Perhaps that is why he is so effective a writer.

Second Wind is a very different sort of book. Herr Zuckmayer is a distinguished German novelist and playwright, best known in England, perhaps, as the author of *The Captain of Koepernick*, who was exiled, so far as one can gather, simply because he was a writer, a Catholic and an individualist. Now, working in his high, bare room overlooking the Hudson, he thinks nostalgically back to the days that are gone, when life was young, Germany was a Republic, and Berlin had more to offer than Bloomsbury or Montparnasse. And what days they were, too, how coloured and clear-cut, without pastel or half-tone! Writers, artists, musicians, all brilliant, all starving, all loving, all creating, all describing their works to each other, all living flamboyantly on hope, hock and transient patrons. Such times we had! Sprawling on frosty pavements with lovely actresses at two in the morning, walking tight-ropes, climbing roof-trees, throwing books out of windows, pouring wine into gramophones, having vagabond affairs with admirals' daughters, jumping on tables to recite our verses, and finally the Castle in Spain planked down in the garden, the roaring first night, the contracts and the dream come true. In Herr Zuckmayer's case this is the literal truth, and he did achieve the sort of swift and giddy success that gilds everything about it by reflection. Yet, for all the wit and polish of its telling, his story seems thoroughly unreal, just as some of his incidental anecdotes are so rounded and incredible that not even their attested truth can give them an air of veracity. It is clear, too, that he exaggerates enormously. Take, for instance, this account of a provincial dramatic society run by the author and a few of his friends immediately after the last war.

> All the more glorious by contrast were the theatrical evenings which we instituted in the suburbs of Heidelberg. The whole University in a body would appear whenever we staged one of the fantastic symbolic dramas of the painter Kokoschka, or a play on one of the songs of the Swedish poet Bellman. . . . I am free to say that more dramatic talent was poured out on those evenings than I have seen on all the great stages of the various world capitals put together. Our principal actress was Mimi, also known as the Venus of the Middle Rhine—a model for a group of modern painters from the nearby city of Karlsruhe, who were distinguished for being particularly mad. Later it was Cilly, a genuine gipsy who told fortunes in coffee houses . . .

Can we really believe that Cilly and the Venus of the Middle Rhine possessed more dramatic talent than was to be found in the theatres of the world? Was their brief-lived society really much better than the little experimental theatres that flourish, like pleasant weeds, for a month or two in university towns or behind the Grays Inn Road? Herr Zuckmayer lived twenty glorious years between two wars, and was whisked away, as abruptly as Cinderella, before the glamour faded and the party could begin to pall. Now, in a foreign country, with tugs hooting down an alien river, nostalgia heightens what optimism had already embellished, and turns memory into romance. *Second Wind* is clever, finished, amusing and often delightful, and takes us with dream-like grace and facility through a world which now seems as bright and remote as a tank in a tropical aquarium. It is, psychologically, a perfect specimen of the exile's book, and I shall be surprised if soon there are not many more like it.

Messrs. Bentwich and Reckitt have less to say than Dr. Infeld and Herr Zuckmayer, and do not say it so well. Mr. Bentwich belongs to a distinguished Jewish family and his path to success was a very easy one, culminating in high office in Palestine, and on Committees for the international relief of German Jewry. For many years he tried to ease the problem of Judo-Arab rivalry and guide the well-meaning but often contradictory activities of a series of High Commissioners, but in 1931 was forced to resign, apparently because it was believed that his race merely acerbated the issues he was endeavouring to solve. A sketchy outline; but *Wanderer Between Two Worlds* is written with so much tact and diplomatic caution that as Mr. Bentwich becomes more important, his autobiography grows increasingly like a bland, diffident, semi-official *démarche.* Occasionally he just raises the lid off his kettle of fish, and we momentarily glimpse the savage and seething depths beneath, then the crack is closed again and discretion resumes its dry command. It is a pity Mr. Bentwich cannot occasionally drop his public face, for it is plain that he could reveal a great deal more than he has cared to do. *As It Happened* is like a good after-dinner speech. Mr. Reckitt has a slow, coy, benign, deprecatory

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humour in the best British manner, and never makes the error of going slowly through too much haste. He tells us a great deal about himself. He sucked his toe in infancy to send himself to sleep. He was once croquet champion of England. He is a critical believer in social credit. He has enjoyed life very much. He once saw Queen Victoria in the distance. He was a friend of Orage. Nothing about himself is too small to recount, though some things are too important. It's a pity Shakespeare never wrote anything like it. JOHN MAIR

RECONSTRUCTION

Reconstruction and the Land: An Approach to Farming in the National Interest. By SIR A. DANIEL HALL. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Here at last is the analysis of the structure of British farming and the synthesis of the reconstruction which it needs, for which we have so long been waiting. Unbiassed by nostalgia for the past or by the sentimental regard for the rural scene which afflicts so many of those who write about it, Sir Daniel Hall summarises in this book a lifetime's experience of agricultural research, administration and practice. He shows how the 200 years' partnership between the private landowner and the small capitalist farmer, which served the country well in many ways, has failed to keep pace with the evolution of modern life. The little fields and farms of the horse-labour age are not adapted to an age of mechanical power. The little capitalist farmers are not educated in most of that knowledge of the soil and of plant and animal life upon which the proper conduct of their work depends. There is no scope on our little farms for trained managers, no prospects for skilled labour. Under our system of taxation, which gradually annexes to the State all wealth which the individual does not work to replace, the landlord, the other partner to the business of farming, has fallen down on his job of maintenance of the permanent equipment.

Until the economic crisis of ten years ago, the country was content to see its farming industry running at half speed under this organisation. Since that date the State has worked hard to rehabilitate it, not, however, by reorganisation to remove its inherent weaknesses, but by subsidies and doles of every kind and description to palliate them. And so it continues to-day. The landlord has no capital for drainage or water supply, for repair of cottages. Very well, let the taxpayer contribute half the cost and lend him the money for the rest of it without interest. The farmer does not understand the need for re-sowing worn-out pastures, for turning stored-up fertility into additional food for the nation. Very well, let the taxpayer give him a subsidy as an inducement. Let him be bribed to lime his land and to phosphate it, to dig his ditches out, to produce clean milk.

The purpose of Sir Daniel Hall's book is to show that reconstruction must be fundamental, that this indiscriminate largesse cannot be the basis of a permanent policy. By it, agriculture is in danger of becoming the kept woman of industry, a degradation abhorrent to those who really love the land. While conceding everything claimed for the landlord and tenant system in the past, he shows that the time has now come for the State to assume the landlord's functions, by buying him out, so that it may carry out the re-planning of farms and farming on a scale which the private owner could never undertake. It is impossible to grow corn or to produce milk and meat efficiently on the 100 to 200 acre farms which make up the greater number of our agricultural holdings. For corn-growing, for example, the unit is nearer 3,000 to 5,000 acres than 200. While the dairy farm and some other forms of farming can be reorganised in units somewhat smaller than these, the industry will never be able to take its proper place as a competing industry in world economy until it can find room for the trained manager and give opportunity for advancement to the skilled worker. Modern conditions, modern knowledge, modern machinery, call for re-planning of the farms themselves. Under State ownership of the land, combined with private or joint-stock enterprise in farming, Sir Daniel Hall envisages a new orientation of the old partnership and a real reconstruction of rural industry. With the fullest understanding of the difficulties of landlords and farmers, his argument proceeds clearly and relentlessly to show the disabilities of the old system and the way of reform. His contribution to the consideration of post-war social reconstruction is of first-class importance, and it may mark a turning-point in agrarian affairs in this country.

C. S. ORWIN

COVERING CHINA

Dawn Watch in China. By JOY HOMER. *Collins.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

American journalists have learnt the knack of describing the sufferings, aims and hopes of other peoples' wars, and Miss Joy Homer's description of her travels in China is as vivid as a moving arrow on a diagrammatic film. She tells us a great deal about herself and her emotions in sailing through a mine-field, eating hard-boiled duck eggs in a straw-and-bamboo shelter amongst the guerillas, adopting a young bear, dodging bombs, sending off her stories in between a terrific bombardment and dragging bits of people out of the bombed hospital and so on. We never know what Mr. Sun thinks of Miss Homer when betrousered, and loaded with a typewriter, a vast bulk of moving-picture and other camera equipment, notebooks and sharpened pencils (but no sharpener), she suddenly turns up in Wenchow and joins a party in a junk on the first stage of her journey. to Chungking.

The Chinese probably enjoyed her as much as she obviously enjoyed them, and their casual, individual, serious, smiling attitude towards life, whether it was in the crowded shopping streets of the burning town of Chungking, or the various American Red Cross hospitals in the districts she visited that were smitten by typhus. She tells us that when she left she vainly tried to make her thoughts on Free China profound and impressive, as befitting the solemn occasion of farewell, but wisely gave up the idea and decided merely to try to "draw some weighty conclusions like hot plums out of the mysterious pie." Sitting on a prickly bank "watching Chungking slowly materialise like Valhalla from her cloudbank," she decided that one day she would return to China to find peace. A few weeks later, she sat on a hospital balcony in occupied China listening to the rifle shots and the booming of cannon in the nearby guerilla area. Among the Japanese she met was a Christian pastor sent by his Government in the interests of appeasement. "Our ideals and hopes for our country," he said, "and for China have been turned into—what is the word?—jests? Bad jokes? Many of us came hoping to do good here, and we have brought nothing but misery."

Everything in China seemed to work out for the benefit of Miss Homer's lyrical pen. One of the "greatest floods in human history" happened in North China and her newspaper asked her to cover it. From the flood she went on to Peking, where she was impressed by the anti-Japanese feeling just below the surface. As for the Japanese, they were organising anti-British demonstrations in which the marchers were paid 40 cents an hour and unlimited free lemonade.

Politics do not bind Miss Homer's affections. At the end of a few weeks in Japan, she began to love "this odd, intense graceful little country," although the people hadn't "the same frank self-criticism, nor the passionate love of life, nor the sense of humour" she had grown to love in the Chinese. She easily makes impulsive, sweeping statements; of the Japanese she says that "probably no nation upon earth has such potential cruelty and such potential greatness." She kept thinking, she tells us, "It is the funny old game all over again—pin the tail on the donkey. Please someone, turn Japan in the right direction, head her straight. She might one day become a natural leader of us all." A nice, generous-hearted simple American uplift idea.

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Miss Homer has written an exciting travel story, lively and fresh and full of incidents which show her sense of adventure and often great courage. But it is a pity that she feels called upon to join the schoolgirl chorus which sings lyrics about Madame Chiang's beauty, "her sleek black hair and perfect skin, her immaculate make-up," and so on. Madame Chiang must be tired of this beauty-parlour description and the Generalissimo must hate the words "inner serenity." However, an over-lyrical style here and there does not hide the author's sense of the courage of a people which have withstood Japan's mechanised armies and built up a new national life even while the invader is on their territory. DOROTHY WOODMAN

GAELIC INCANTATIONS

Carmina Gadelica: Hymns and Incantations. By ALEXANDER CARMICHAEL. *Oliver and Boyd.* Vol. III, 18*s.*; Vol. IV, 21*s.*

The first two volumes of this work were originally published in 1900 and re-edited in 1928. After Dr. Carmichael's death, the present two volumes have been prepared and edited from his collections by Professor J. C. Watson. They contain the Gaelic text and translations, with full notes, and they provide an ordered mass of invaluable material. The first of the two volumes contains hymns and incantations dealing with birth, general protection by day and night, journeying, food, good wishes, the moon and sun, death, etc.; the second those concerned with live creatures, gear and provision, plants, healing, and a few miscellaneous.

Besides the direct folk-lore interest of the collection, it has a wider, if not so intense, importance. It belongs to that ill-determined region where magic, religion, and science met, and indeed still meet; in very few minds are they even now adequately defined, and perhaps in fewer can they be so defined without loss. It is impossible to pronounce what a man or woman "means" by what he says or does; too much archaeology and anthropology has lost itself in that waste. We can only go by the ritual itself, the definite acts and the definite phrases. The distinction between magic, religion, and science must lie in that alone. I use the word "magic" here not in the sense of a definite diabolism, of which there is, so far as I can see, nothing in these volumes, but in the lesser sense of a rite operative by itself without special reference to the idea of a God. Thus there is here a quatrain on the Club-moss.

> Thou man who travellest blithely
> Nor hurt nor harm shall befall thee
> Nor in sunshine nor in darkness
> If but the club-moss be on thy pathway.

That is pure "accidental" magic; you must not search for the club-moss, nor do anything with it; the effect is wholly in the chance finding. On the other hand, acts such as drinking of special fountains or the search for stones of a particular shape (generally in the case of disease, when the shape must be correspondent with the part affected) are of the nature of ritual magic; as is the charm which heals chest seizures by referring them to natural objects.

> Thy strait and thy sickness
> Be upon the earth holes,
> Be on the grey stones,
> Since they have firmest base.

In these the incantations often involve Divine names. The distinction between the religious and magical use of these was drawn up about 1604 in the *Malleus Maleficarum*, and it is a little surprising (though I do not know why it should be) to find that that distinction is still the best workable. The science, such as it is, is rather in the acts, and it is almost wholly concerned with healing. The invocation of the Divine Trinity which occurs so often has, of course, a semi-scientific side; it involved the drawing-in of three distinguishable powers in union.

Two general principles recur from time to time. The first is the doctrine of correspondences, to which allusion has already been made. Sometimes the correspondence is surprising: thus in a charm against the evil eye, the might of "the seven Paters of Mary" is invoked on various birds and beasts—

> Since they themselves can best endure
> And are most symmetrical of form.

This and many other of the poems have in them the real high note of poetry—which also demands constancy and symmetry.

The other doctrine can only be touched on; it is, both naturally and supernaturally, the doctrine of substitution. The serious examination of this, as a magical idea or a religious fact, still, I think, remains to be done. It is, in general, a substitution of power for weakness, but the very act of substitution is itself powerful. Correspondences are the passive side of active substitution; thus the Yellow Butterfly is said to be marked like the body of Christ in the shroud, and is therefore a good sign over a corpse. On the other hand, the death of Christ, "the sleep of Jesus' wound, the sleep of Jesus' grief," is to be the very sleep of the dead. From all these points of view, this work is of high importance. CHARLES WILLIAMS

Horizon, November, 1*s.* 6*d.*

This is the most consistently interesting *Horizon* that has yet appeared. The long letter from unoccupied France is a great scoop—so striking is the information and so acute the comments. The editorial sortie against contemporary verse shows Mr. Connolly at the top of his form; Mr. R. C. Trevelyan has never written more delightfully than here on Simple Pleasures, and an extract from Mr. Evelyn Waugh's forthcoming novel is brilliant. Mr. Grigson's article—"Samuel Palmer: the Politics of an Artist," is instructive and luckily is concerned more with the artist than with his unimportant political opinions. A drawing by Mr. Osbert Lancaster further enriches a most pleasurable periodical.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

MOZART: *Symphony in E flat* (K543). L.P.O. and Sir Thomas Beecham (Col. LX927–9).

BRAHMS: *Concerto No. 2 in B flat.* Horowitz, with N.B.C. Philharmonic Orch., cond. Toscanini (H.M.V.).

DVORAK: *Notturno.* Hallé Orch., cond. Malcolm Sargent (Col. DX1040).

PROKOFIEFF: *Lieutenant Kije.* Boston Symphony Orch., cond. Koussevitzky (H.M.V. DBS8894–6).

DEBÚSSY-STOKOWSKI: *Clair de Lune.* Philadelphia Orch., cond. Stokowski (H.M.V. DA1634).

GRIEG: *Homage March* ("Sigurd Jorsalfar"). Hallé Orch., cond. Constant Lambert (Col. DX1037).

LISZT: *Hungarian Rhapsody No.* 1 (No. 14). Boston Promenade Orch., cond. Fiedler (H.M.V. C3235).

DVORAK: *Romantic Pieces* and *Ballade.* Frederick Grinke and Gerald Moore (Decca K1016–7).

MOZART: *Fantasia and Fugue in C* (K394), for Piano. Denise Lassimonne (Decca K1008).

LISZT: *Gnomenreigen* and *Liebestraum.* Kentner (Col. DX1038).

BUTTERWORTH: *A Shropshire Lad: Song Cycle.* Roy Henderson, acc. Gerald Moore (Decca M506–7).

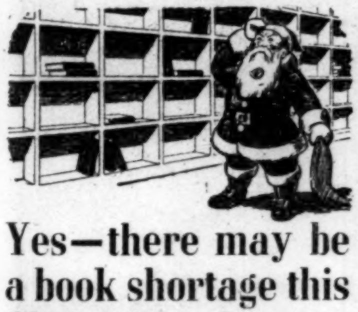
TRADITIONAL: *Oft in the Stilly Night* and *Comin' thro' the Rye.* Maggie Teyte, acc. Gerald Moore (H.M.V. DA1804).

HOLST: *I Love my Love*, and
STANFORD: *The Blue Bird.* Fleet Street Choir (Decca K1021).

PUCCINI: *La Bohème:* "Lovely Maid in the Moonlight" (Act I), and Mimi's Farewell (Act III). David Lloyd and Joan Hammond, acc. Hallé Orch, cond. Leslie Heward (Col. DX1039).

HANDEL: *The Messiah:* "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Isobel Baillie, acc. Hallé Orch., cond. Leslie Heward (Col. DX1036).

Of the trio of symphonies with which Mozart wound up his symphonic career, that in E flat is perhaps the most contented and the least searching. The G minor, like the Quintet in the same key, reviews sad memories and generally leaves the listener with an impression of incurable *Weltschmerz.* The "Jupiter" again anticipates the mood—heroic and strenuous—of Beethoven's Fifth: it challenges,



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successfully, the melancholy of its composer's fundamental temperament, and expresses thereby the power of his imagination. But the E flat is not explorative; it is as if Mozart were looking back over happy scenes of his past life—scenes made happier by the sifting of imaginative synthesis—so that it is not perhaps altogether fanciful to see in the Minuet a remembrance, charged with tenderness, of one he himself had danced in years gone by. This symphony is, like the "Paris," much more rococo in character than its siblings, a quality which calls for especial care in the management of tempi. Suffice it to say that this issue is thoroughly up to Beecham standards: the dynamic range is kept well within distortion point throughout, and the mixing of strings with wind in the Andante is most cleverly balanced. It is a long time since we had anything like a satisfactory recording of this wonderfully mature masterpiece, and it seems safe to predict that this one will take first place for some time to come.

The particular combination of artists, orchestra and recording conditions associated in the latest issue of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto had not led me to expect anything very satisfactory, but I had not feared quite the worst; now, however, I feel obliged to say that in my opinion this set is a dead loss. Toscanini is well known for his intransigence *vis-à-vis* the requirements of recording technique, but surely it cannot have been necessary to alter the sound-perspective so constantly and so perceptibly, and at the same time to permit those roaring, cat-tearing tutti, which would take the point off a walking-stick. The general effect of artistic crudity is appalling, and not at all mitigated by Horowitz's performance, which seems to me incredibly insensitive, and, moreover, recorded with uniform deadness of tone. A pianist who attempts as tremendous a work as this *must* have intellectual resources adequate to meet its demands; but Horowitz, besides falling punctually into every trap laid for him by the composer, plays the whole thing as if it were by Saint-Saëns. The beginning of the Scherzo is hopelessly botched by both soloist and orchestra; and at a most important point, just before the coda in the same movement, the horns are all over the place. Again, that starry passage in the Andante, where the clarinets hold the melodic line, is entirely spoilt by Horowitz's stolid playing of the arpeggios. The Finale goes rather better, but is nothing to write home about. Collectors are advised to hold on to the Backhaus set for the time being. The desideratum is, of course, a re-recording by Rubinstein.

Good minor music finely played is infinitely preferable to bungled masterpieces, and I cannot recommend too highly the Dvorak *Notturno*, a lovely elegy well worth rescuing from oblivion. This is the music of evening rather than of night (why composers invariably employ sequences of open sixths for an elegiac effect is a nice problem in musical aesthetics); it is an exquisitely touching Romanza, just the right length, and makes one regret the unwritten symphony of which this would have formed the slow movement. In spite of having been made in a concert hall, the recording is very good, and is, besides, a fine specimen of sustained string legato.

Lieutenant Kije is essentially incidental (in this case film) music; it contains some clever sound effects, most realistically reproduced, and as an accompaniment to visual action I daresay it was effective enough. But all by itself it really will not do; there is too little material, and I cannot imagine wanting to hear it twice, though the first and last bars—a very distant trumpet call—evoke quite a charming picture. The instrumentation is ingenious and occasionally startling, but it is given rather too much juice.

Stokowski's orchestration of *Clair de Lune* was a bright idea—much brighter than some of his more pretentious efforts in the same field. This little piece—after all a most lovely example of Debussy's early manner—lends itself happily to orchestral elaboration and variation of timbre. Stokowski's layout is, I should say, closely modelled on that of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*—again a good idea; and the result is very completely ravishing. The recording is good, if a little steely.

To come down to earth, the squareness and obviousness of the march rhythm militates against any musical material, however good; but Grieg's impeccable technique found a way of presenting his fine, noble tune without vulgarising it. The progressions are highly characteristic and the whole thing as good an example of the genre as you could find. The recording is on a par with that of the Dvorak *Notturno*.

The Liszt Rhapsody in question makes use of the same themes as those contained in the Hungarian Fantasia. The piece is, on the whole, not too hackneyed to be enjoyable, and in any case the score is amusing and performed with a great sense of fun, though the brass at the opening has been allowed to swamp the strings. The recording is fairly good—full without being coarse, but rather "boxy."

Dvorak's "Romantic Pieces and Ballade" are occasional music of not more than average charm, the kind of thing any prolific and thoroughly professional composer can throw off in his sleep. "*Wissen Sie, ich hab' zu viel componiert,*" said Dvorak once to Sibelius, thinking back, no doubt, on works such as these. The general effect is rather like that of the later Schumann, but Schubert (as so often with Dvorak) is ultimately responsible, for the best of these pieces—No 3. Grinke is apt to go flat in these records, especially in the double-stopping; otherwise the issue is a respectable one.

Mozart's fugues are particularly interesting (there is material for a whole article here); often romantic, both in substance and in the rhetoric of their climaxes, they look forward to Beethoven's contrapuntal style rather than back to Bach's. Taken together with the magnificent Fantasia, this is one of Mozart's most considerable works for piano solo.

Miss Lassimonne gives it a sober, intelligent performance, without airs and graces, but also perhaps with insufficient weight; this is male music.

I take it that no effort of virtuosity or delicacy of phrasing could properly redeem the nasty sentimentality of the *Liebestraum*. But if one must hear it, at least let it be as it was written, *i.e.*, without the addition of a curbstone violin and played as "straight" as possible. Kentner's rendering is inoffensive, and he seems to have been at pains to "present" the thing afresh. Where the *Gnomenreigen* is concerned he takes the tempo too deliberately for my taste, as Lamond did a month or so ago, but after the first section the piece goes with a brilliant swing.

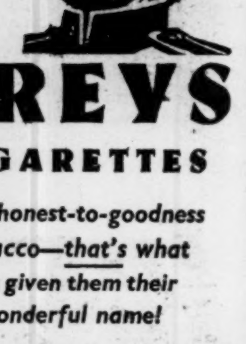
It is generally agreed that George Butterworth might, had he lived, have come to something fairly considerable; but what he left seems to me to show a charming nostalgic talent rather than genius. The orchestral Rhapsody which forms the epilogue to these songs has established itself securely among English audiences, but I cannot feel that the songs themselves are very distinguished; the release from actual words produced a much finer and more authentic composition. The nearer the composer got to pure folk song (e.g., in "The lads in their hundreds") the more satisfying the result. "Is my team ploughing?" will not stand a moment's comparison with Vaughan Williams's setting. Butterworth evidently had not the flexibility of invention, nor yet the peculiarly passionate imagination of his contemporary and competitor in the same field, Ivor Gurney. The recording is perfectly adequate and the songs are very romantically delivered, which will please some and vex others.

Miss Teyte's latest venture strikes me as something less than completely successful. True, the airs are delightful and the singing is rounded and technically admirable; but I cannot help feeling that such things call for a less sophisticated voice and a somewhat rougher, freer rendering.

The Fleet Street Choir is a male ensemble of remarkable technical accomplishment, possessed of a fine legato style and quite without that dreadful hermaphroditic scream which characterises so many choirs. The Holst is a beautiful piece of impressionistic writing that reminds one faintly of Delius's "To be sung of a summer night on the water." It seems a pity that this medium, like the organ, is not more often used to that kind of effect. The Stanford, on the other hand, is on the dull side: here is another composer who wrote too easily and (therefore) too much.

The new recording of one of Handel's most famous arias seems beautifully sung; but a considerable echo rather blurs the outline, especially where Miss Baillie's long, sustained phrases are concerned.

The excerpts from *La Bohème* gave me a good deal of innocent pleasure. What skilful stuff it is and how discreetly orchestrated! I have long



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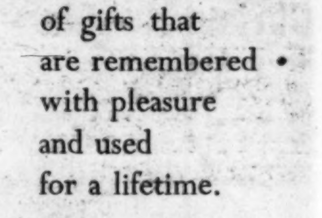

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thought the third act a small masterpiece of pathos, and David Lloyd's enchantingly youthful tenor brings out this quality most admirably; it also records remarkably well. Miss Hammond's voice, in comparison, sounds rather thin in the first duet, though this fault is less perceptible in the second.

When, by the way, do H.M.V. intend to favour us with the second volume of Rubinstein's Chopin Mazurkas? The first was a *locus classicus* of playing and recording, and I seem to feel that we have been kept waiting long enough for the completion of the set.

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No. 617

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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, December 8th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 614

Set by Audrey Hilton

We offer the usual prizes of Two Guineas and Half-a-guinea for the best description in rhyming slang of a railway journey, a shopping expedition, a visit to Madame Tussaud's or an incident in the House of Commons. Limit, 150 words.

Report by Audrey Hilton

So many entries were not in rhyming slang that I think a definition would not come amiss: rhyming slang is the replacement of a word by a set phrase or cliché which rhymes with it. Children = kids = Gawd-ferbids, and 'oller-boys-'oller = collar. About a hundred years ago the Cockney began to use the language, partly out of a sense of the picturesque, partly for the sake of conspiracy. Unable to resist this opportunity for sly criticism, he often invented phrases which were not only a substitute, but a comment. Stanley French nicely carries on this tradition with "coming-later" for "waiter" and, not quite in the same vein, he produces "clip-and-nick-its" for "tickets," "grows-and-yields" for "fields." On the other hand, many of the classic examples have rhyme without reason, and, in addition, constant use has worn away all but a part of the original phrase. You may hear "tit-fer" (tit-fer-tat = hat), "pigs" (pig's-ear = beer), "sky" (sky-rocket = pocket), and scores of others, in or out of any East End rub-a-dub-dub. For the matter of that, rhyming slang has not been exclusively Cockney since the last war.

Competitors had two courses: either they could produce a convincing and colloquial description using the classic slang, or they could invent appropriate novelties. There were a few good entries in the former class; for example, W. S. Craddock's "I'd just 'ad a bull-and-cow with the trouble-and-strife over my whistle-and-flute . . . so I nips down the frog-and-toad to the shop on the Johnny-Horner." But the pitfall here was the use of a recognised phrase in the wrong way. "Darling-daughter" means "water," not "porter," and "tea-pot-lid" is certainly "kid," but the verb, not the noun.

In the way of novelties, this war produced Leslie Johnson's convincing ". . . my bit of trouble's bin shaky on 'er plates (of meat) ever since a to-or-from fell near our 'elter-skelter in the double-or-quits." John Thornton's entry makes a lovely noise: there is an echo of "Finnegan's Wake," but none of the earthiness of slang about his "Quidpopping Imposition." W. R. and Stanley J. Sharpless went one further; the former went to a fish-shop to buy a "Large Matisse of salt Eistedfodd," and the latter described his journey, apparently with the help of a rhyming dictionary and a Gazetteer.

The shopping expedition naturally lent itself to the genuine article, but I was surprised to find so few entries about Madame Tussaud's. Some of the competitors kindly provided glossaries, but one or two, who didn't, were only comprehensible after a good deal of effort. I enjoyed wrestling with R. S. Jaffray's costermonger: "Last hide-an' I gives the old music a Mae." You may fancy translating this, but I warn you that a dictionary won't help you!

I recommend Richard Pomfret for the first prize. He used the classic phrase where it was appropriate, and his inventions were entertaining. B. Watson comes a very close second, and I print his glossary (in spite of his mistake about tea-pot), because it exemplifies the art, the wit and the flexibility of this vulgar tongue.

FIRST PRIZE

EXTRACT FROM HANSARD

Mr. Goosey-Gander: Is the Hon. October-November aware that the purple-passion of rosy-lee is causing some dissatisfaction round the breakfast cain-and-abels of this sea-girt miss-and-mile?

Maj. Blacksmith's-Forge: I was not stock-and-share of it.

Mr. Goosey-Gander: Well, it's about the birdlime that somebody's mince-pies were opened.

Maj. Blacksmith's-Forge: Has the Hon. October-November any chimney-and-roof for his statement?

Mr. Goosey-Gander: Yes, my trouble-and-strife. She says it's a waste of good darling-daughter brewing the miserly tomtit she gets.

Maj. Blacksmith's-Forge: Does she realise that cubic plates-of-meat of tossing-and-tipping are strictly limited?

Mr. Goosey-Gander: Rosy-lee is a munition of gash-and-gore.

Maj. Blacksmith's-Forge: The matter will be hang-fired into.

RICHARD POMFRET

SECOND PRIZE

MADAME TUSSAUD'S

I said to my trouble: "Got the duke straight?" and she says, "All but a cows," so I said, "What about an outing? Take the tea-pots and all."

So we sets out for Madame Tussaud's: Bert and Alf in their best whistles and clean daisies and me in the mud-in-your-eye that I wear to the slither and a titfer.

"I'll sport another lord apiece," I say when we're inside, "to see the Horrors. There's a finger there sitting in the flowery, just like real."

But we'd lost Bert, and Alf kept asking, "What're their 'amps made of, dad? Eh, dad? Their 'ampsteads, dad?"

Then we see Bert with a steamer in a blue quaker who's telling him somewhat that makes his minces pop out. "Garn," says Bert, "he's no charlie, bonnie or not. Not with that there barnet, he aint'. An iron-'oof more likely."

GLOSSARY

Trouble	trouble and strife = wife.
Duke	Duke of Kent = rent.
Cows	cow's calf = half (of a pound) = 10s.
Tea-pot	tea-pot lid = kid.
Whistle	whistle and toot = suit.
Daisy	daisy roots = boots.
Mud-in-your-eye	tie.
Slither	slither and dodge = lodge (e.g., of an Oddfellows, etc.).
Titfer	tit for tat = hat.
Lord	lord of the manor = tanner (*6d.*).
Flowery	flowery dell = cell.
'Amps, 'Ampsteads	Hampstead Heath = teeth.
Steamer	steam tug = mug (anyone not "wide.").
Quaker	quaker oat = coat.
Mince	mince-pie = eye.
Charlie	Charlie Ronce = ponce (admiringly; "clever," "one of the boys").
Barnet	Barnet fair = hair.
Iron-hoof	= poof (by inference a "softie," etc.).

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SATURDAY, 29th November.—VICTOR GOLLANCZ: "Victory in Europe." 2.15 p.m., Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Tickets 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.* 6*d.*, 3*s.* 6*d.* at door or from Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, S.W.1.

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The salaries, which are in grades rising to maxima of £630 and £840 a year, will be according to age and capabilities, and will not be above £480 and £640 a year respectively on appointment.

The appointments are for the duration of the war only, and do not carry entry to the permanent staff. Men under 35 years at the time of registration will only be considered if exempt on medical grounds from military service.

Application must be made on forms which can be obtained from the Recruitment Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. Persons who have completed a form of application within the last six months need only refer to that fact and state their desire to be considered for the posts now advertised. Envelopes should be marked "Foreign Monitoring" and a stamped addressed foolscap envelope should accompany the request. Completed forms must reach the Recruitment Officer not later than December 12th.

ROYAL AIR FORCE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE.

Vacancies exist for men graduates with substantial qualifications in Mathematics or Geography. Candidates must be laymen over 32 and not over 55 years of age on 1st September, 1941.

(2) *Salary.*

(*a*) The initial salary for teachers in the service of local Education Authorities seconded to these appointments by permission of their Authority, will be at the rate laid down for Secondary Teachers under the provincial Burnham Scale; bearing the number of increments adopted by the Authority in each individual case.

(*b*) In other cases a fixed salary between £234 and £384 per annum according to previous experience.

Both the above subject to a fixed allowance of £70 payable in addition to salary.

(3) The Teachers (Superannuation) Act, 1925, applies to all appointments.

(4) Candidates appointed will be given commissions in the R.A.F.V.R., and will wear uniform. They will, however, be on civilian conditions of service.

(5) Men over 35, already engaged in full-time teaching, or men below that age whose calling-up under the National Service (Armed Forces) Acts has been deferred, should *not* apply.

(6) Those on the Central Register should apply to Central Register (Section G), 41 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1. Those whose names are *not* on the Central Register should apply on a *post-card* for application forms to Under-Secretary of State, Air Ministry (E.S.1) Dept. Q.J., London.

(7) Applications from persons serving in the Armed Forces or *Government Departments* must be forwarded through the normal official channels.

COUNTY BOROUGH OF MERTHYR TYDFIL

GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME

Appointment of Social Welfare Organiser.

Applications are invited from persons between the ages of 30 and 45 for the appointment of a female Welfare Organiser in the County Borough. The salary to be paid will be £250 per annum plus travelling expenses.

Candidates should have good training and experience of social welfare work, organising ability and knowledge of social legislation. The Officer appointed will be required to organise and stimulate social and welfare activities in connection with evacuated mothers and children in the County Borough of Merthyr Tydfil, and will work under the direction of the undersigned and in close contact with the Welfare Committee.

Applications stating age, qualifications, present appointment (if any) and previous experience, should be sent to the undersigned not later than the 8th December, 1941.

Town Hall, EDWARDS ROBERTS,
Merthyr Tydfil. Town Clerk.
27th November, 1941.

THE HEADMASTER, Bishop Wordsworth's School, requires at the beginning of the Spring Term a temporary Assistant Master to teach French in the Main School and French and German up to Higher Certificate and University Scholarship standard. He is willing to consider gentlemen of literary ability fluent in Languages, who have had no previous experience of teaching in schools. Ability to assist in games, particularly Hockey and Swimming, an advantage.

Apply immediately to the Headmaster, Dr. F. C. HAPPOLD, Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury.

LABOUR PARTY.—Applications are invited for the post of District Organiser for the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire to supervise general organisation of the Party therein and to act as Secretary to the proposed Regional Council. Application forms and information about conditions of appointment to be obtained by December 13th, 1941, from the National Agent, Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1.

LABOUR PARTY.—Applications are invited for the post of District Woman Organiser for the East and West Ridings of Yorkshire, to supervise the work of Women's Sections and Women's Advisory Councils. Applicants must have experience of such work. Application forms and information about conditions of appointment to be obtained by December 13th, 1941, from the Chief Woman Officer, Labour Party, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1.

WANTED domestic help. Opportunity for lady with girl 8-14 to educate. Country, safe area. Community life with teaching staff. MISS M. S. BROOKS, B.A., Hall School, Wincanton.

Appointments—continued

Y.W.C.A. Club Leaders and Hostel Wardens, 25–45 years of age, needed for Industrial Hostels and Girls' Clubs and for Land Army Hostels. Short preparation courses for candidates of suitable experience, bursaries available. Salaries £100 to £150 resident with full board. Some posts at equivalent non-resident rates. Applications by letter only, stating age, training and experience to Personnel Secretary, Y.W.C.A. Central Building, Gt. Russell Street, W.C.1.

GIRLS' Club Organiser required to work in the counties of Denbighshire, Flintshire and Montgomeryshire. Welsh speaking and must have had practical experience of club work. Salary £250 p.a. and expenses allowance. Applications with copies of three recent testimonials to the Employment Officer, National Council of Girls' Clubs, Hamilton House, Bidborough Street, W.C.1.

UNIVERSITY House, Victoria Park Square, Bethnal Green, E.2. A Woman Warden is required for mixed wartime hostel which is part of the Settlement. Salary £120 a year, and full board. Applications to the Warden of the Settlement.

HEADMASTER wanted, single, pref. young for prog. Preparatory School, Northants. Entire charge staff and school and teach Maths., History, Geog. School recog. Bd. of Educ., I.A.P.S. Interesting post. £200–£250 resident. Must be exempt by age or C.O. Box 332.

COMMUNITY School needs for next term Educationalist int. in community, qual. to teach Elem. Maths. and Woodwk.—ALDERWOOD HSE, Greenham Common, nr. Newbury, Berks.

YOUNG woman wanted, shorthand typing and general office work. West End. Write Box 163, ANDERSONS, 14, William IV Street, W.C.2.

FREUDIAN Medical Student wants Nurse, boy (1½), suit refugee or woman with older child. COCUZZI, Woodlawn Beech, Alton, Hants.

HOMELY working Housekeeper for professional woman, little boy, 3½. Own room. 45, Aldenham Avenue, Radlett.

MATRON, energetic and enthusiastic, required for Northern co-educational school; nursing experience. Box 349.

ARTIST wanted for progressive school. Able also to teach a Language or Science. Box 363.

WILL any intelligent male or female help two ladies in country hotel, run on progressive lines. Live in. Box 352.

ARTIST req. for occasional medical work. Details and specimen work to Box 302.

SAFE Area. Wanted companion help, willing share work running small guest house (6 bedrooms). Maid kept, good home for suitable person. PETERS, Great Howle, Howle Hill, Ross-on-Wye.

C.O. wanted help dairy farmer, Devon; comfortable home, good building. Experience with milking advantage. Box 360.

HOUSEKEEPER required, two men farming. Opportunity for political work and other ints. THOMAS, Hardacre Farm, Preston, Canterbury.

EDUCATED Assistant Cook Housekeeper (salaried) wanted in Settlement, S.E. London. Apply Warden, U.G.S. Settlement, Staffordshire Street, Peckham, S.E.15.

YOUNG couple with small son, require help in house. Refugee preferred. Live as family (if desired). Pleasant home. 25*s.* commence. 48 Bancroft Avenue, N. 2. MOU. 7254.

MATRON required in progressive Co-ed. School; nursing exp. essen. Wennington Hall, via Lancaster.

INTELLIGENT young lady for small prog. home-school (ages 6–10). Share respons., teaching, h.-hold duties with young couple. Small wage. Hollyside, Brockweir, Chepstow.

FARMER, young Czech, seeks change with up-to-date small farm. Dry clean milker. Best references. Box 317.

YOUNG man seeks employment as Fire-guard, London area, A.R.P. blitz experience, exempted from military service. Box 322.

EXP. Sec., graduate, seeks resident post estate, school, etc., where baby permitted, or companion help. Gd. cook, needlewoman. Box 344.

JOURNALIST, doing war-work, requires spare-time work. Own typewriter. 3, The Broadway, Newhaw, Surrey.

SHORTHAND-TYPIST, German refugee, 6 years exp. in English offices, seeks post. Salary £4 weekly. Box 356.

COLL. trained Nursery Nurse (23) wants institutional post in London. Day or night duty. Box 357.

Schools and Educational

EDUCATION in Community. Children 5-12. Vegn., food reform. Qual. Staff. Mod. fees. Vac. Spring term. COMMUNITY SCHOOL, Alderwood Hse., Greenham Com., Newbury, Berks.

LITTLE ST. FRANCIS, co-ed. Home Board. school, ages 3–10, cultd. atm., qual. staff, safe, all year rd. Flamstead, nr. St. Alb., Herts. Tel.: Markyate 284.

PINEWOOD, Crowborough, is now at The Fir Hill, Colan, St. Columb, Cornwall. Home school for boys and girls 3 to 13. ELIZABETH STRACHAN. St. Mawgan 279.

ST. MARY'S School, Wedderburn Road, Hampstead, now at Yarkhill Court, nr. Hereford (Tel.: Tarrington 233). Boys and girls, 4-16. Emphasis on languages. Modern dietary. MRS. E. PAUL, Ph.D.

WYCHWOOD Girls' School, Oxford. 10 to University age. Small classes. Exceptional cultural opportunities. Self-governing community. Apply MISS LEE, M.A.

WANTED Electy. and Magnet lessons (elem., with apparatus), pref. N.W. Ldn. Box 364.

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LEIGHTON Park School, Reading. Six Open Scholarships value £84-£50; additional Exhibitions of £50-£40, for general ability, Music and Art, will be awarded in March. Basic fees 150 *gns.* per annum, inclusive. Apply to THE HEADMASTER.

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FOR Sale. Complete Dining Room Suite, consisting of oval mahogany table, 5 ft. 6 in. by 4 ft. 6 in. (extending to 10 ft. 6 in.), six mahogany chairs and two "carvers" to match, one 6 ft. settee and two winged armchairs. Eminently suitable for West End doctor's waiting room. Can be seen in Nightingale Lane, Clapham, by appointment. No dealers. Box 365.

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U.C.C., founded 1887, prepares students for Matriculation, Special Entrance, Intermediate, and Degree examinations of London University. The College is an Educational Trust, not conducted primarily as a profit-making concern. Low fees; instalments. Free re-preparation in the event of failure. Over 10,000 U.C.C. students passed London University examinations during 1930-1940.

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SCHOOLMASTER'S wife with Nursery School exp., wants child paying guest as companion for her daughter, aged 3. MONTGOMERY, Seaton Down Road, Seaton, Devon.

PACIFIST buried in agriculture in isolated district, wants purchase typewriter to continue interrupted literary work. Must be fair price. Box 351.

MOTHER req. help with 2 children during school hols., Xmas, nr. London. Box 358.

ADVERTISER, male, would appreciate meeting another, either civilian or in one of the Forces, for an exchange of views on books, music, plays or films. Can entertain in own flat in Central London. Box 340.

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STRATFORD-ON-AVON. Officer's wife and child seeks mother and child over 2 as sole guests. Box 353.

WELL-balanced intelligent tenant wanted for room in attractive riverside house, 40 mins. West End. No service, but all facilities. Interests along lines of "Ends and Means." No cranks. Box 355.

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WANTED, home for invalid lady (broken leg, but able to move), refugee. Oxford or Buckinghamshire preferred. Box 366.

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YOUNG Lady wants a bedsitting-room in pleasant home. Pref. Knightbridge District. Rent 12*s.* 6*d.* Box 361.

REQUIRED by professional man one-roomed self-contained flat in modern block, Central London. Mod. rent. Box 350.

TWO simply furn. bed-sitting rms. req. in Leatherhead or Epsom district; young people away week-ends. Own catering. Box 359.

BACHELOR girl, working all day, inadequate salary, wishes to share flat with another. Central London. Box 346.

FOR 4 gentlemen, Dec. 28th, wk. Furn. country cottage (and piano?). Box 347.

To Let and Wanted

LOVELY Flat to let, Lincoln's Inn. 3 rooms, kit., etc. Also wanted sensible girl for mod. Sussex farm, exempts service. £1 and board. Apply M., Tues., W. mornings. APPELBE, 7, New Square, W.C.2.

HOUSE or Cottage urgently needed by mother and 3 children; 4 bedrooms, safe area, no sirens, rent or purchase.—WILLEY, Deddington, Oxford.

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YOUR favourite suit copied exactly in a Redmayne Countryside Tweed, £6 12*s.* 6*d.* (26 Coupons). Patterns free. REDMAYNE, 10 Wigton, Cumberland.

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THE PACIFIC DUELLISTS

Like a grotesque divinity in one of her classical prints, Japan still postures with uplifted sword. Will it ever strike? No one can feel sure, but if it remains for ever a painted blade above a painted ocean, the prestige of the boaster who wields it must sink out of sight. During the week-end the Premier, General Tojo announced that he proposed to "purge" the Western Democracies out of Asia and to "crush" them, if they resisted him. Simultaneously, he asked for a renewal of the interrupted Washington talks. To this the Americans have agreed. The background of these conversations will be sombre. The Japanese Grand Fleet is said to be cruising, with twenty big warships, off British North Borneo; the American Grand Fleet is steaming westwards from Hawaii, while in French Indo-China a Japanese army and air fleet are poised for a swoop upon Thailand. In this situation what can Mr. Kurusu and Admiral Nomura hope to win from further talks? No suggestion has come from Tokio of any bribe or concession that might placate American indignation.

Then is it the purpose of the Japanese to gain time? That is the probable explanation, since the proposal of a three months' truce, which Mr. Cordell Hull flatly rejected last week came from them. Yet at a first glance it would seem that they have much to lose by delay. The freezing of their assets by the A.B.C.D. Powers has hit them hard; this it was that drove them to negotiate. They have, of course, reserves of strategical materials, especially of oil, which some experts estimate as sufficient for a major war of twelve months. Three months hence, since the war in China would go on, these stores would have shrunk perceptibly. On the other hand, it is said that Hitler, reckoning on the complete submission of Marshal Pétain and Admiral Darlan, has promised to lend the French Fleet to Japan before February is out. Finally, if General Tojo is what he appears to be, a man who blusters while he hesitates, he may welcome delay because he dare not take the risk of any irreparable act.

To guess the intentions of the American administration is hardly easier. It is clear, as the Gallup polls show, that the American people are much readier for war with Japan than for war in Europe. But is Congress equally ready? If it were so, would not the President have sought from it authority, by way of resolution, to warn Japan that any fresh aggressive act will involve her in war with the United States? Such a warning has for long seemed to offer the best hope of peace. Constitutionally the President cannot give it without the permission of Congress. It may be significant that he has not risked a request for its permission. Finally, do we know the President's own mind in this matter? As we read it, he prefers to conserve all America's belligerent resources and instincts for the struggle against Hitler. Avowedly, until the other day, he was (to use his own word) "appeasing" Japan. Doubtless this appeasement was tactical: on sufficient provocation he would fight.

Where, then, does Mr. Roosevelt draw the line which Japan will cross at her peril? Instead of attempting to guess the answer to that question, let us enquire what Japan intends to do. By all accounts her immediate purpose is to isolate the Chinese by closing the Burma road. She might march from Indo-China into Yunnan. That would raise no new international issue, but this province is an impenetrable chaos of precipitous alps and gorges. If, however, she should choose the easy route through Thailand, she must intend to attack the road where it traverses British territory. That is so obvious that we should be fully justified in falling upon her forces, if she moves, either at sea or on land. But could we in that event count on American support? America would probably respond by increasing her aid to China, which she is already helping, on the model of Spanish Non-Intervention, by the loan of pilots and planes. But it is uncertain whether Congress would sanction war for the defence of Thailand. Whether it would do so for the sake of the Dutch Indies we cannot pretend to guess. For Asiatic Russia it probably would do nothing, if we may draw the natural inference from the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the A.B.C.D. group. Mr. Cordell Hull will never compromise over the basic principles of international morals which he reaffirmed in his last despatch to Tokio. How much he will do to enforce them is another matter.

These guesses and strategical calculations fail to touch the gravity of this issue. Our own national stake, like America's, is only secondary in this affair. But China is fighting, not merely for national survival, but for the lives of millions of her people who must perish if this brutal war drags on year after year. Japan was guilty four years ago of an appalling crime against humanity: she repeats it every day. If America could bring herself to the point of action and make Japan understand that if necessary she will fight in concert with the Russians and ourselves, she might put an end to a ghastly war without risking so much as a bomb-crater on her own soil.

The Russian Victory

Timoshenko's victory lit up a week that without it would have been overclouded by our anxiety over Libya. This success suggests that he is making good what Budyonny's inadequate leadership lost. He has reorganised the armies of the south into a force capable of taking the offensive in a large-scale war of movement. That is the main fact: the recapture of Rostov is the evidence. Apart from this, Rostov itself is of capital importance, firstly as a railroad terminus, secondly, as a centre for the distribution of oil, thirdly and chiefly, as a key to the Caucasus and its wells. What happened is now fairly clear in outline. Timoshenko, by his rapid westward march, outflanked the Germans in Rostov on their left. Simultaneously a Russian force, equipped with tanks, crossed the Don on pontoons below the town and took them in the rear. It is possible that civilian snipers also attacked them in the centre of the city, though there is no confirmation of this Nazi story from the Russian